

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BONN CENTER FOR DEPENDENCY AND SLAVERY STUDIES

DEPENDENT

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LABOR HISTORY AND STRONG ASYMMETRICAL DEPENDENCY

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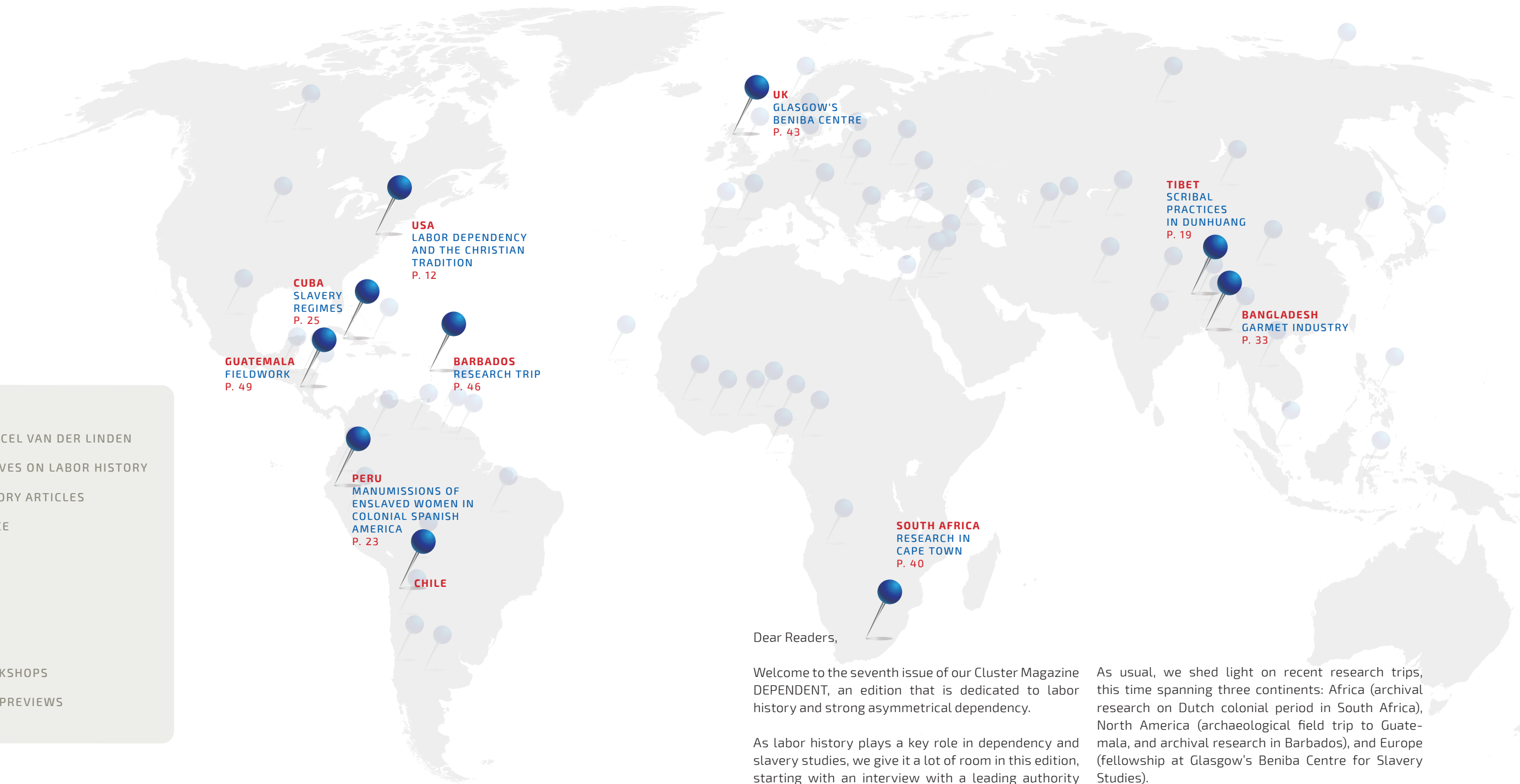
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Dear Readers,

Welcome to the seventh issue of our Cluster Magazine DEPENDENT, an edition that is dedicated to labor history and strong asymmetrical dependency.

As labor history plays a key role in dependency and slavery studies, we give it a lot of room in this edition, starting with an interview with a leading authority in the field: Prof. Dr. Marcel van der Linden from the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam (IISG).

To grasp the involvement with labor dependency at the BCDSS, we asked our scholars to each state in a couple of sentences what form of labor dependency they encounter in their research. A further seven articles related to labor dependency offer in-depth perspectives – from Colonial Spanish America to present-day Bangladesh – including religious views on labor dependency through the lens of Judaism and early Christianity, Tibetan Buddhism, and contemporary Christianity.

As usual, we shed light on recent research trips, this time spanning three continents: Africa (archival research on Dutch colonial period in South Africa), North America (archaeological field trip to Guatemala, and archival research in Barbados), and Europe (fellowship at Glasgow's Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies).

What's new in this edition is a review section covering articles on a current art exhibition and recent movie release, both exploring German colonial entanglements. Don't miss out on four in-depth conference reports, as well as our news from around the cluster. We have welcomed many new faces since the start of the year and have, again, seen many important new publications by cluster members.

Enjoy the read!

Cécile Jeblawei



INTERVIEW WITH MARCEL VAN DER LINDEN

"The Triumph of Labour. Dedicated to commemorate the International Labour Day May 1, 1891, and dedicated to the Wage Workers of All Countries": The art of Walter Crane (page 214), English artist and book illustrator (1845-1915)

PROFESSOR DR. MARCEL VAN DER LINDEN is a senior fellow at and former research director of the International Institute of Social History (IISG) in Amsterdam and was professor of Social Movement History at the University of Amsterdam. He is a member of the International Advisory Board at the BCDSS.

As one of the leading experts on labor history worldwide, he is a co-founder of the Association of Indian Labour Historians (1996), the European Labour History Network (2013) and the Global Labour History Network (2015). For twenty years, he served as President of the International Social History Association. His books and articles have been published in eighteen languages. His latest book, *The World Wide Web of Work: A History in the Making*, was published in May this year.

Earlier this year, Marcel van der Linden was interviewed for a podcast on labor history, which will be aired as part of a small BCDSS series next year. We extracted this interview for the DEPENDENT.

Prof. Dr. Marcel van der Linden from the International Institute of Social History (IISG), Amsterdam

You say that "to understand labor dependency, we have to go beyond the western narrative of free and unfree labor. Labor history can give us some insight into this." First of all, what is labor dependency?

Labor dependency, I would say, is the situation in which you have two actors or two people or two organizations, and one has a much larger power than the other. The decision-making power of the superior actor is such that the subordinate actor has to follow much of the opinions or instructions of the more powerful one.

There is an enormous variety, within labor relations, of different forms of inequality and dependence. The

most extreme cases are the chattel slaves, for instance, in Brazil in the early 19th century. The slave owners, when they bought a slave, would have already calculated the amortization of the slave for the next seven years. That meant that they expected the slave to die from this work within seven years. So, the slave had almost no maneuvering space. They could do nothing, not even rebel openly.

However, there is a wide spectrum of asymmetrical dependencies. A modern German BMW worker, for instance, has a mighty trade union behind him and earns a lot of money, relatively speaking. He or she can also change jobs.

You look at labor dependency from a historical perspective. Can you introduce us to the notion of labor history?

So, going beyond the western narrative of free and unfree labor implies that we are currently missing other narratives?

The whole idea of a contrast between free and unfree labor seems to have a western origin in itself. The Jamaican-American sociologist Orlando Patterson argued that only slaves could invent the notion of freedom, and this, according to him, happened in ancient Greece. From there the notion started to spread, especially across Europe, and later to the Americas. So in that sense, maybe freedom and free labor are originally a western construct.

An important aspect is accessibility to sources. In literate societies like ours, where people have been using writing for a long time, especially civil servants and the like, we have a very good documentation. However, in some other parts of the world, you do not have that enormous spread of information

that we can mobilize for our studies because there is a tradition of oral communication. And there are countries which have an even older tradition of literacy, like in China, for instance, or in India, where you have a lot of sources that are still useful. Finally, I should imagine there's also a situation where you had literate societies, or at least the civil servants were literate, but the archives they created have been destroyed. For instance, in Thailand, Burmese armies demolished important archives in the eighteenth century.

First of all, labor history is, of course, a history of labor, i.e., of work and the work relations of people and working classes. But the notion has gone through a number of transformations over the course of the years. You mentioned that I was working for the *International Institute of Social History* in the Netherlands. So, we collect archives, for instance, of labor movements and important people – workers' leaders and so on. However, when the institute was founded in 1935, social history was considered to be equivalent to labor history. So, the *International Institute of Social History* was in fact the International Institute of Labor History. Later, social history became much broader. Nowadays, social history covers almost everything you can think of: eating habits, sexuality, music, etc., and it has therefore dissociated itself a bit from labor history. Labor history became a smaller undercurrent of social history.

In the last twenty to thirty years, there has been a tendency towards international collaboration: historians are spreading their wings, doing more global and comparative work and involving more aspects in their research. We can now see a kind of convergence, where labor history and social history are growing together again. Labor historians do not only study wages, they are also interested in the households in which people live or how they treat their children. Of course, the position of women has been a very important topic, as well as gender. So nowadays, it is a much broader field. It covers not only wage laborers, housewives and the like, but also all forms of unfree labor, of which slavery is only one variant. There are many more forms of unfree labor; for instance, indentured labor.

Indentured labor is a kind of contract labor. People from Java in Indonesia or from Bengal, for instance, are hired and asked to sign a contract. Then, they are brought to another part of the world, such as the Caribbean, and work there to pay off the costs of their trip. It is a very expensive trip for these poor people, and they will have to work for the employer in this new country for as long as it is needed to be able to repay the cost of the transport. During this time, they cannot leave; in fact, they are prisoners of their employer. They can also be physically punished, whipped, etc., just like slaves. There are people who call this a new system of slavery, but that's not correct, I think.

Weren't most of the European immigrants who went to the Americas also indentured laborers?

There were many European indentured laborers who went to the Americas. In fact, a large part of the workers in the United States was originally indentured, but the interesting thing is that after a while – and we do not know the exact reasons for this – indentured labor was replaced by slavery. So then for a long time, slavery became more and more dominant in the United States. In the 19th century, with the abolition of slavery, indenture was reinvented. There was then a resurgence of indentured labor in the US, but not just in the US, also in other parts of the world. Many Indian, Chinese and Indonesian workers were also transported across the globe.

Where do you see the boundaries between slavery and labor dependency?

Slavery is usually a labor relationship, so in that sense, slavery is already part of labor history. And the good thing about the BCDSS is that they are not thinking in terms of slavery versus freedom, because that is a too restrictive binary. They want to have a more general approach; hence, they came up with the concept of asymmetrical dependency. I think that we labor historians can contribute to the understanding of asymmetrical dependencies, although one has to get used to these terms. The notion of asymmetrical dependency is becoming more and more clear. An important contribution was made earlier this year, when a group of BCDSS scholars published a reworked version of their Concept Paper in the Journal of Global Slavery. It clarified many of the problematic aspects of the concept.

I give you the example of minimum wages: They are not enough for someone to participate in society. Isn't that a sort of slavery? It's certainly a form of dependent labor, but it's not slavery. There is a problem here, and it is also a political problem that there are a lot of different definitions of slavery in use around the world. In my view, a slave is somebody who is owned by somebody else and can also be sold by that person. So, the slave as a whole person is a commodity. However, many organizations, including NGOs such as the *Walk-free Foundation*, employ a much broader definition of slavery. They say that if people cannot decide on their own fate, then that is a form of slavery. I think that is too wide a definition, but it is a disagreement which will continue between the different researchers and politicians and organizations who deal with these issues.

Let's take the *International Labour Organization (ILO)*, for instance, which is a very important organ of the United Nations. It supplies statistics on many of the labor relations in the world. They prefer to use the term "forced labor" instead of slavery in all those cases where people are not sold on the market. I think that is in itself a little bit better, but the problem persists: The notions of slavery and freedom and of slavery as unfree labor are not refined enough for historical and social analyses.



Book illustration showing the kidnapping of a free person of color in Virginia to sell him as a slave: George Bourne, *Picture of slavery in the United State of America* (Boston, 1838), facing p. 120

It is more important to see that every labor relationship, especially a dependent relationship, has three aspects. The first aspect is "entry": How do people enter into a labor relation? There are many ways. People can be kidnapped, for instance; there is the term "to Shanghai" somebody. People can also be sold by their parents, and people can be taken hostage in war. There are many different ways in which people can become a wage slave or a wage laborer.

Then you have the second aspect, which is the extraction of the labor from the labor power. People embody their labor capacity in their bodies and in their minds. The work then is that you extract, abstractly speaking, the labor from the labor power, from the labor capacity. This can also be done in many different ways. We have all kinds of incentives. You see, the problem for an employer is that as soon as he has somebody – a slave or a wage laborer or whatever – he has to get this person to work for him. In order to do this, he needs to offer incentives, and these can be different incentives. It can be compensation in the sense of saying: "If you work for me, then you get delicious food and you get a wage"; or it can be coercion, such that you force people to do work for you with the use of violence. It can also be commitment, where you say: "If you do this, then you will help humanity and it will make a better world." This is where the whole system of "worker of the month" comes into play, which McDonald's has now and the Soviet Union had in the past. These incentives together can stimulate people to work, or they do not successfully stimulate them, which may also happen.

Finally, you have to exit. How do people leave this labor relationship? This can also happen in many different ways. People can die, people can quit, or they run away. There are many different forms of exit.

If we use an elaborate taxonomy of these different forms, we can have a more refined definition of slavery. Then you will see that slavery can have different entry points or possibilities, different incentives and different forms of exit. This will allow you to construct a large number of slave-like labor relations that are distinct.

And these span all settings, all regions of the world? Or what do you mean by "global labor history", a term you coined?

Yes, it means you are not afraid of boundaries. When you study a problem, then you follow the traces to wherever they lead you. I once did a project on Dutch paintings of the 17th century, a flourishing period, the so-called Dutch Golden Age. According to estimates, five million paintings were made in the 17th century, most of which have disappeared, which was probably a good thing! However, we studied the paint that was used by the painters. Vermeer, for instance, is famous for his blue. Where did the blue come from? We discovered that it was lapis lazuli from Afghanistan. People climbed high up the mountains to reach these mines, which were only accessible for a few months per year because there was so much snow the rest of the time. They mined the lapis lazuli and brought it to Europe, where it was ground, enriched with oil and then turned into paint. The red, on the other hand, was from a tiny insect called *Cochineal* from northern Mexico. We then see that the painters of the 17th century were already drawing on materials from a number of places across the globe. Of course, this was not as common as it was later, after the

Second World War, when we saw an enormous increase in what is called global commodity chains.



The Kitchen Maid; Jan Vermeer van Delft, ca. 1660, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

My jeans, for instance, contain two kinds of cotton: one is the hard cotton for the legs, which mainly comes from Pakistan, and the soft cotton for the pockets is from Benin. The color is from a chemical factory in Germany, the nylon thread is from Japan, and the zipper, which is made of zinc, comes from a mine in Australia. All this is then assembled by female factory workers in Thailand. The jeans they produce are later sold in Amsterdam, where I bought my pair. So, my jeans are a worldwide combination of labor processes.



Contemporary garment factory workers in Thailand

You mentioned the International Labour Organization (ILO) and wage labor earlier. What role do the trade unions play?

They are very important for wage laborers. However, for enslaved people, it's almost impossible to build a union because you need some spare time to meet up and get organized, and you need money to pay membership dues, for example. There have been some attempts to form unions, specially by slaves for hire who had earned some money. They saved up and put the money together to buy their freedom. However, some have also put it to a different use; for instance, in Bahia, nineteenth century Brazil, where they used the money to finance a strike of slaves. They were supported by the union, a kind of religious brotherhood which coordinated these activities.

For wage laborers, of course, trade unions are much more central. And it's a problem that trade unions are no longer as powerful and important as they were in the past. Nowadays, trade union density – i.e., the percentage of wage laborers who are in unions – has declined to about six percent on the global scale. Eight years ago, it was still seven percent.

The power of workers may also be decreasing in some places but increasing in others. Take a Samsung Galaxy phone, for instance. For its electronics, it needs cobalt, coltan and copper. All these come from Africa, often Congo, where slaves or semi-slaves produce this. These producers of the original materials that go into the Galaxy have a large potential power, because if they were not to produce this, then Samsung could

not produce its phones. However, they are not organized yet; they are very much oppressed and have no unions. They don't know their rights, so they probably also don't know that they are part of a very important commodity chain. One of the things that makes this interesting is to see how these connections work, and that some workers have a potential power which they don't realize. If they were to realize it, it could change the world completely. However, this requires information and education, and there's no incentive for employers who exploit these workers to get them informed and educated.



Catering workers living wage campaign, South Africa (1988)

How can we overcome contemporary slavery and dependency under these circumstances?

It can be achieved in several ways. One very important player is the *International Labour Organization (ILO)* in Geneva. They formulate so-called "conventions". These are resolutions that are accepted by

governments and ratified by the respective parliaments. This, in turn, can lead to measures that would improve the situation of workers. The problem is that there are many countries that do not ratify these conventions, or if they do, they just do it pro forma. In reality, they don't do what is expected after ratification. That would be one thing to work on – to put pressure on countries that have ratified a number of these relevant conventions. For instance, the convention on "Worst Forms of Child Labour" (1999) was ratified by 187 governments worldwide, including Congo. But nobody checks whether the Convention is implemented there.

The other way is education, which could be done via international trade unions who would send organizers or other kinds of educators to tell people how things work. This is, as you can imagine, very dangerous in some cases because their employers are often also warlords who will know how to deal with these educators.

But yes, this is the way forward, I think. We can learn from labor history and why it is so important for our society right now, for politics, for our future. Take the example of the ILO. It is a weak organization because they cannot punish governments for not obeying the agreements they have signed. There is a vacuum of power here. The labor history experience shows that it is very important to solve this problem. However, it can only be tackled when dealing with very weak countries that are dictatorial or despotic. These can be punished by trade boycotts. Myanmar, for instance, has been violating a lot of conventions of the ILO, and as a response, the United States and other countries are boycotting Myanmar where this is relevant.



111th Session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 16 June 2023

The problem lies with big countries like the United States. When they violate the agreement, nobody can punish them. Labor history points to the many deficits, it provides an analysis that can help find ways to improve the situation. Apart from that, labor history is not just an instrumental thing. Labor history is something that shows us how our current world has been created through the efforts of millions or billions of people in the past. This is still visible in our culture, in our habits, and in our organizational forms.

What is your outlook on the future of labor dependency?

I think the situation now is very bad. Trade unions are becoming weaker and weaker, the labor movement and the political wings of the labor movement have largely disappeared, or they are totally confused. Consumer cooperatives, which existed for a long time, have disappeared. So, in that sense, there is a downturn of everything related to a labor organization, while at the same time, the world's working class has never been as large as it is today.

It's a kind of paradox. What we also see now are new germs, new ways of getting organized. For instance, in response to one of the big problems of today: precarious labor. More and more people have no certainty in their life. They may be earning something now and by tomorrow, they will have lost their job again. In India, eight percent currently have a work contract and ninety-two percent do not. Fortunately, this is very different from the situation in our part of the world, but despite this there are more and more people over here who do not have a contract of indefinite duration. There are now attempts to reorganize these precarious workers, and sometimes these can be quite successful.

In Uganda, for instance, the *Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union (ATGWU)* has been organizing truck drivers for decades, originally focusing on workers with a real labor contract. They initially had about 3000 members, then after reorganizing themselves and expanding to include informal workers, their membership number grew and now stands at 100,000. This is a huge success. Unfortunately, it is just a rare case. In India, you have the New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI), founded in 2006, which also tries to organize precarious and informal workers. It's not quite as successful as the union in Uganda, but it is still going well.

There have been some attempts to tackle precarious working conditions in rich countries as well. People have been organizing their own self-help, as is the case with self-employed journalists. They created their own bread funds, i.e., a mutual aid society where they pay into a kitty, and if somebody falls ill, then they can be helped with that fund. So, there are new forms of organization developing, but the problem is that the established organizations, the old trade unions, are often not very receptive to these new attempts yet.

What do you hope for the future?

Real hope, for me, would be to get rid of this dependent labor, all sorts of dependent labor: to ensure that housewives are empowered, that slavery and wage labor disappear because we have democratic, self-managed producer cooperatives. Although I'm not sure this will ever happen! It's very important to do more research on the topic. I think that only by studying dependent labor relations can we find out under which conditions they can be abolished.



Workers of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union, Uganda, campaigning on World Toilet Day 2019

WHAT DOES YOUR RESEARCH HAVE TO DO WITH LABOR DEPENDENCY?



The dream of a cozy life and all work done by robots and AI goes back to the "earliest civilization". The Sumerians of southern Iraq captured foreigners in Kurdistan and Iran in 3500–2000 BC. My project reveals: The Sumerians targeted these regions because they could easily reach them, and because they had dense populations. The Sumerians then made these foreigners do the work of modern home appliances and factory machines: grind, cook, sing and play music, carry stuff, pump water and make clothing.

Dr. Vitali Bartash, Postdoctoral Researcher, BCDSS

Research project: Forced Foreign Labor in Early Mesopotamia: Acquisition, Integration and Use



I research how people in Buddhist scriptoria on the borders of the Tibetan Empire (c. 600–850 CE) „work within“, or mitigate, economic and religious dependency, through real-life scribal practices that range from the eschatological to the scatological.

Prof. Dr. Lewis Doney, Investigator, BCDSS

Research project: Asymmetrical dependencies in social status, daily life and self-identity of pre-modern Tibetans and their neighbors



Slavery often built empires; sometimes it undermined them. In the eighteenth century, African control over labor - especially the labor of potential soldiers - limited the expansion of British influence and made the British Empire in West Africa dependent on the existing structures of slavery.

Dr. Matthew Dziennik, Heinz Heinen Postdoctoral Fellow, BCDSS (Postdoc at USNA, USA)

Research project: Soldiers, Slavery, and Dependence in West Africa, c. 1750-1850



Ancient Mesoamericans didn't enslave people, per se, but they did force them to work. Indigenous groups in Precolumbian Mesoamerica did not engage in slaving practices which resembled many other ancient world societies. Instead, they utilised corvée labor, penal labor, and debt bondage as their main forms of exploitation. It was only later with the arrival of Europeans that widespread old world enslavement became common.

Rosamund Fitzmaurice, Heinz Heinen Junior Fellow, BCDSS (PhD at UCL, UK)

Research project: Indigenous forced labor and dependency in Postclassic Mesoamerica (ca CE 900-1521)



Researching the researcher: How dependent are academics when they produce knowledge?

My PhD examines asymmetrical dependencies linked to fieldwork and working conditions of researchers working on migration.

Katja Girr, PhD Researcher, BCDSS

Research project: Asymmetrical dependencies in science production



My doctoral research focuses on the networks of Pakistani immigrants in Italy, particularly the crucial role that these networks play for both new migrants and those who have formerly migrated. While these networks are often seen as a viable source of help, they are also a source of asymmetrical dependency: As new migrants are offered desired yet insecure jobs on the informal labor market, they enter into multi-layered dependency relations based on class, gender, age, and closeness to the Pakistani expat community.

Ayesha Hussain, PhD Researcher, BCDSS

Research project: Asymmetrical dependencies among Pakistani migrants in Italy's informal labor sector



My research aims to complicate a uniform understanding of Atlantic slavery by examining intersecting dependencies defining the lives of laboring enslaved people in Jewish households in early modern Bridgetown, Barbados.

At the same time, I examine underlying dependencies in the archival record and how these affect knowledge production about the enslaved.

Amalia Levi, PhD Researcher, BCDSS

Research project: Asymmetrical dependencies in the British Caribbean colony of Barbados



Sometimes, paid workers were coerced. Sometimes, coerced workers were paid.

Dr. Viola Müller, Postdoctoral Researcher, BCDSS

Research project: Labor conditions of free and enslaved workers in cities of the nineteenth-century Americas



My dissertation looks at relationships of asymmetrical dependency around gender and sexuality as expressed in early medieval Christian confessional manuals (penitentials). According to the penitentials, the practice of penance for 'sins' (including those that are sexual in nature) could have encompassed everything from comparatively minor and temporary practices, like abstention from meat consumption for a specified period, to entrapment in strong and enduring relations of asymmetrical labor dependency (e.g. confinement to a monastery and/or assignment to particular labors).

David B. Smith, PhD Researcher, BCDSS

Research project: Masculinities, Homoeroticism and Dependencies in the Early Medieval Penitentials & Ecclesial Law



My research is about the intersections between historical forms of slavery and their contemporary legacies, mainly in post-slavery West African societies. I have done research on the fate of intergenerational mixed families, on women displaced due to exploitation, on social protest and anti-slavery mobilization, and on how actual spatial mobilities over time have contributed (or not) to changing up- or downward forms of social status mobilities. Contemporary legacies of slavery in post abolition societies, are often very closely intertwined with prolonged marginal positions on contemporary labor markets of global capitalism and uphold coercion in the form of asymmetrical dependencies and (forced) labor.

Dr. Lotte Pelckmanns, BCDSS Alumna (Associate Professor at University of Copenhagen)

Research project: Trial and Error: Discursive Displacements and Fractal Authorship of 'Slave Testimonies' in African courts

Meeting of the Federal (now "National") Council of the Churches of Christ in America in Philadelphia, December 1908'

RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES ON LABOR DEPENDENCY

LABOR DEPENDENCY AND THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION: ON CONTESTABILITY, AUTHORITY, AND THE "SOCIAL FACTOR OF SALVATION"

by David B. Smith

CONTESTABILITY

When it comes to the study of religion, much of our work at the BCDSS is understandably focused on teasing out the ways in which religious narratives and theological motifs have been and continue to be (mis) used by structures of power to justify, codify, and intensify asymmetrical dependencies. The historical record teems with examples of religious actors who have justified oppression and marginalization in the name of their God, gods, or sacred texts. Nevertheless, religions, spiritual narratives, and faith communities also possess an innate capacity to subvert dominant social orders and provide a nexus around which advocacy for more just social relations can coalesce.

It appears to me that no theological treatise or scholarly exposé has yet surpassed the words of U.S. President Abraham Lincoln in summarizing the insoluble competition between divergent interpretations of the Christian tradition. In his Second Inaugural Address, this man

who had shunned official religious affiliation, noted a theological irony that escaped many church leaders in his day, even as it stood at the heart of his nation's greatest calamity and enduring shame. Speaking of Americans (most of whom identified as Christian) in the North and the South, he acknowledged with exacerbation that "both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each evokes his aid against the other...."² Thus, with Lincoln, one might say that faith leaders and scholars who fail to recognize the contested relationship between religion's propensity to dominate and its capacity to liberate—its malleability in defense of the status quo and its imaginative vigilance on social peripheries—oversimplify the historical record and squander opportunities to explore some of the most vibrant and persistent ethical questions raised by the analytical concept of asymmetrical dependency.

Perhaps due to the long-standing antagonism between Marxist-oriented historiographies and religious institutions, the abiding links between the labor movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have often been neglected. Within the Christian tradition, one does not have to look far to find instances in which people have used the language of faith to justify their unwillingness to combat strongly asymmetrical labor dependencies. Spiritualizations of the gospel that silence voices calling for radical social change have been part of the church's story for a long time. However, it is also the case that some of history's most strident opponents of asymmetrical labor dependencies have been members of and leaders within the Christian church.

AUTHORITY

For Christian theologians (especially of the Reformed Protestant variety, like myself), engagement with social questions, including those dealing with labor dependency, must be grounded in a reading of the Hebrew Bible (i.e., the Old Testament for Christians), the New Testament, and the broader Christian tradition. Perhaps this point, more than any other, places the theological academe at odds with the way other disciplines and frameworks treat labor history. Marx, for example, from his early writings onward, denounced the "critical theologians" of his time because he believed "their failure to go to the root of the matter is inevitable, since even the critical theologian is still a theologian ... he [*sic*] must start out from certain presuppositions of philosophy which he considers authoritative"³

Those who claim to be historians and theologians at the same time must find ways of remaining academically agnostic on certain theological questions if they are to engage honestly with the thought worlds of their subjects. Thus, the task of the church historian is not to measure orthodoxy or define which texts and traditions

ought to be doctrinally authoritative. Nevertheless, they must ground their work in an acknowledgment that, whether or not they personally embrace a given source or presupposition as fundamental, their subjects often did.

Indeed, this point is especially relevant to considerations of Christian engagement with labor movements. Whatever the merits of Marx's critique of the theologian's fixation on authority, theological convictions can and often have spurred believers onward in their advocacy for the social causes that were close to his heart. As Heath W. Carter, a historian of Christian involvement in U.S. trade unionism, writes, "In the late nineteenth century, ordinary believers helped to launch the trade union movement *precisely* because the Bible told them so"⁴

In many contexts, it is virtually impossible to account for historical slavery and freedom discourses, let alone labor history, without reference to the Hebrew Bible in general and the Exodus narrative in particular. Various groups throughout history have used the story of Israel's escape from enslaved labor in Egypt into "... a good and broad land, flowing with milk and honey..." (Exodus 3:8, NRSV) to justify their resistance to bondage and memorialize their liberation from oppression.

In various labor movements, Jews and Christians who advocated for the rights of the working classes also drew inspiration from the biblical notion of the Sabbath. They argued that, from the dawn of creation, God had ordained one day per week for holy rest (Genesis 2:1-3). Indeed, the injunction to "Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8, NRSV) has served as a rallying cry for advocates of progressive labor policies around the world. Likewise, proponents of labor reform have often put to rhetorical use the following declaration of the Hebrew Prophet Micah: "Has he told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and love kindness, and walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8, NRSV). Or, as a cacophony of voices has long proclaimed in the face of pervasive asymmetrical dependencies, "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:24, NRSV).

Slavery, not to mention pre-industrial labor inequality and other forms of strong asymmetrical dependency, were ubiquitous in the societies that shaped the worldviews expressed by the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. As the previous reference to Lincoln's speech makes clear, the biblical tradition and its interpretation offer ambivalent and contestable perspectives on some of history's most important socio-ethical quandaries. Lincoln's more ardent critics would have proclaimed, with jubilation, that the biblical narrative

is hardly an extended freedom discourse, a worker's manifesto, or a universal declaration of human rights. Nevertheless, as already stated, opponents of strongly asymmetrical labor dependencies have often looked to their scriptures as a source of strength amid their struggles to build more just societies.

Various strands of the Christian tradition have read the biblical notion that Jesus "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave" (Philippians 2:7a, NRSV) as an admonition to live lives of humble submission to earthly power structures, even as they find in it a note of encouragement to those at the bottom of status hierarchies. Indeed, while many interpretations stop short of drawing explicit social critiques from this pericope, Christian readers (both ancient and modern) have interpreted Philippians 2 as one of several New Testament affirmations that "God shows no partiality" regarding nationality, race, gender, class, or circumstance (Acts 10:34, NRSV).

According to more subversive interpretations of Philip-
pians 2, however, Jesus' identification with the servant class should be read differently, depending upon the reader's social location. To the wealthy and powerful, the image of Christ as an enslaved person does, indeed, convey an implicit ethical spur to humility, even as it calls for the strategic deployment of privilege on behalf of the marginalized. Yet, for those who are oppressed, Christ's "descent" to the lowest rank of the hierarchy of his day testifies to an eternal promise, namely that the poor and despised are not alone in their suffering. Indeed, many Christians believe that through Jesus the Christ, God identifies with the poor (not with their oppressors, regardless of religious affiliation) in the experience of suffering and degradation.

With its apocalyptic warning to wealthy people who oppress the poor, James 5:1-6 has also yielded fodder in fights for better working conditions. Likewise, 1st Peter 5, which instructs community leaders in their responsibilities, draws upon earlier traditions to assert: "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (1st Peter 5:5b, NRSV). This declaration, which proponents of labor reform have long viewed as more than a moralistic edification to individual believers, is a brick in the biblical foundation for what Latin American Liberation theologians call "God's preferential option for the poor."

Some Christian groups have shunned what they call "confessionalism." Nevertheless, the practice of composing and declaring statements of faith, either to present an authoritative summary of the church's theology (e.g., the Apostle's Creed) or to note a faith community's response to particular socio-cultural developments, is a long-standing Christian practice.

Amid the grit and grime of the industrial revolution, various U.S. mainline protestant denominations affiliated with the Federal (now "National") Council of the Churches of Christ (USA) adopted a new faith statement on December 4th, 1908. *The Social Creed of the Churches* draws upon key elements of the so-called "social gospel" tradition, which developed a political theology based upon (among other sources) Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). The creed's signatories proclaimed, "We deem it the duty of all Christian people to concern themselves directly with certain practical industrial problems."⁵ The document also outlines its member churches' opposition to unjust labor dependencies in fourteen points. It then concludes with an address "to the toilers of America and to those who by organized effort are seeking to lift the crushing burdens of the poor, and to reduce the hardships and uphold the dignity of labor, this council sends the greeting of human brotherhood [sic] and the pledge of sympathy and of help in the cause which belongs to all who follow Christ."⁶

After the dawn of the present century, in 2004, the World Alliance (now "Communion") of Reformed Churches (WCRC), which represents over 80 million Christians globally, hotly debated and ultimately adopted the *Accra Confession*. While overtly polemical and short on workable alternatives to the prevailing global order, this faith statement captures the prophetic imagination of the Reformed Protestant tradition when it decries the asymmetrical labor dependencies that continue to plague the world. Drawing insights from, among other sources, Latin American dependency theories, which describe the exploitative nature of transnational and transhemispheric economic relationships, Article 8 of the confession condemns "the policy of unlimited growth among industrialized countries and the drive for profit of transnational corporations."⁷ Accra thus builds upon various strands of Reformed thought, along with ecumenical resources, to articulate a practical theo-politics of opposition to structures of production, exploitation, and labor inequality that are both the cause and effect of geopolitical dependencies. Its socio-theological reflections are laced with biblical imagery. The confession draws its energy and gravitas from the prophetic imperative to "... break the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice, to let the oppressed go free" (Isaiah 58:6, NRSV).

"THE SOCIAL FACTOR OF SALVATION"

As in Lincoln's day, the pressing intra-ecclesial struggles of our time center around divergent readings of how Christianity's spiritual inheritance speaks to contemporary realities. Wherever individual Christians stand on socio-cultural questions of labor dependency, all of us read, more or less, the same Bible and pray to the same God. Yet, as with other groups—whether religious or not— we continue to affirm shared sources as authoritative, even as we contest the application of those sources to social questions. Scholars and coreligionists who fail to recognize this discursive complexity and the contested nature of authority in religious communities cannot do justice to the multi-faceted relationship between the Christian tradition and pervasive asymmetrical dependencies.

In the study of religions and the worldviews they help to shape, we must not allow the vicissitudes of human history, including those that involve the (mis)use of humanity's ultimate concern as a justification for social asymmetries, to generate false dichotomies in our work. There are no simple binaries between religious institutions and liberative discourse, including those that address dependency phenomena. As the American social gospel theologian, the Reverend Walter Rauschenbusch, wrote in 1917:

*"How far the actualities of church life fall short of such an ideal forecast [i.e., the eradication of asymmetrical labor dependencies], most of us know but too well. But even so, the importance of the social factor in salvation is clear from whatever angle we look at it. What chance would a disembodied spirit of Christianity have, whispering occasionally at the key-hole of the human heart? Nothing lasts unless it is organized, and if it is organized of human life, we must put up with the qualities of human life in it."*⁸

Indeed, while many Christians throughout history have equivocated on the "social factor" of the gospel message (specifically, its capacity to subvert asymmetrical dependencies), others, including the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., have confessed their own version of the following statement: "Any religion that professes to be concerned about the souls of men [people] and is not concerned about the slums that damn them, the economic conditions that strangle them and the social conditions that cripple them is a spiritually moribund religion awaiting burial."⁹



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Pompeii family feast painting, Naples

RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES ON LABOR DEPENDENCY:

ON SLAVES AND WORKERS IN EARLY JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN DISCOURSE

by Hermut Löhr

If we want to reflect on how the realities of the economic and social life of the time were perceived and criticized in Jewish scriptures and the Jewish tradition, a short passage from an early (Jewish-) Christian letter, (probably fictively) attributed to one of Jesus's brothers named James, is a good starting point. Another important point for our reflection is the influence those realities had on Jewish-Christian morality, which developed at this time and which has, of course, had an enormous impact far beyond its original time and place – an impact that still shapes our world today.

The passage I mentioned both polemicizes and comprehensively criticizes different kinds of luxury: possessions such as gold, silver, and garments. James 5:4 says,

“Listen! The wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.”
(transl. NRSV)

We may ask whether those on whom “James” calls to listen to him – “the rich ones” – were actually his intended readers and, consequently, whether he imagined them as members of early communities of believers in Christ. Or were they primarily presented as stereotypes for the purpose of vilification, polemics, and warning? We know from socio-historical research that in all probability the earliest Christ communities may in fact have included some members of the social and political élite of the Roman Empire. They certainly included both masters and slaves, employers and employees, all together in the same community.

Unlike other scenes, sayings, or parables from early Christian literature, this verse does not refer to the imagery of slaves and slave-owners, but to that of wage workers and their unjust employers. More than one text shows that these wage workers were more often imagined as temporarily hired, seasonal, and itinerant laborers, rather than as long-term, familiar, and trustworthy employees.

Let us look, for the sake of comparison, at a passage from the Gospel of Luke from the late first or the early second century C.E., so roughly from the same period as the epistle by (or attributed to) James. Luke 17:7-10 draws a picture, in the voice of Jesus, of a remarkable little scene from the daily life of slaves and their owners:

“Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field, ‘Come here at once and take your place at the table’? Would you not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink’? Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? So, you, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, also say, ‘We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!’”
(transl. NRSV)

This scene takes up a more general discussion – in Judaism and emerging Christianity, but also in the non-Jewish Greco-Roman culture of the time – about the social practice of eating together (the so-called commensality), including masters and slaves. For example, In one of his letters, ep. 47, the Roman philosopher Seneca boasts about how he daily shares a table with his slave. At the same time, it exemplifies the importance of meal scenes as a shorthand for social relations and their metaphorical importance.

Existing scholarship is not entirely sure on the milieu and the cultural context from which the Gospel of Luke emerged, and the readership for which it was composed. The excerpt I quoted above seems to suggest two social roles for those being spoken to: a) that of (small-scale?) slave owners addressing their field slaves as they come back from work, and b) that of slaves obediently submitting to their master's will. Is the speaker recommending that the disciples of Jesus – those who followed him and had become part of the narrated world, but also those who identified themselves as Christ-followers or Christ-believers while reading (or hearing) the text – should take on the role of slaves? Does this text thus allude to one of the prominent motifs in early Jewish and Christian literature, that of *Statuswechsel*, i.e. change of social statuses and roles resulting from God's direct action or God's indirect influence: from slave holder to slave, i.e., to God? For our research into forms and ideologies of inter-human relations of mutual, balanced, or asymmetrical dependence (and their dynamics) in antiquity, this motif seems to be of major importance. It had a significant impact on the thinking about relations between humans and God in a variety of literary genres in the Jewish and Christian traditions of the time.

By making use of a somewhat different imagery of social, economic, and professional relations (co-existing with the imagery of different forms of slavery at the time), the verse from James 5 quoted above also seems to invoke a different aspect of the moral discourse: that of justice and injustice, both in everyday working life and far beyond. The direct appeal made here – to pay one's workers a just wage, or at least the wage that had been agreed upon beforehand – may have been under-



Registration document for orchards owned by 2nd century Jewish woman Babatha

stood by readers (at different times, in different situations) as a moral, religiously founded challenge to their own way of doing things, or as support for their own feelings, ambitions, and their struggle for a fair wage. Research into how people reacted to this and other texts that address this issue (the most prominent New Testament example probably being Matthew 20:1-16, the parable of the workers in the vineyard) could tell us about the impact of Jewish and Christian traditions on different epochs, cultures, their discourses and ideologies. Structures and ideologies of social and economic dependence cannot be fully understood without taking into account their – biblical or other – authoritative traditions, texts or foundation myths.

At the same time, a closer reading of James 5:1-6 would expose the text's intertextual web – a cluster of quotation, interpretation, updating, and even subversion of biblical and post-biblical ancient Jewish texts. This is apparent in passages from the Torah such as Leviticus 19:13 (and also v. 9) or Deuteronomy 24:14-15, with the latter directly addressing (male) Jewish adults:

“You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy laborers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land in one of your towns. You shall pay them their wages daily before sunset, because they are poor and their livelihood depends on them; otherwise they might cry to the LORD against you, and you would incur guilt.”
(transl. NRSV)

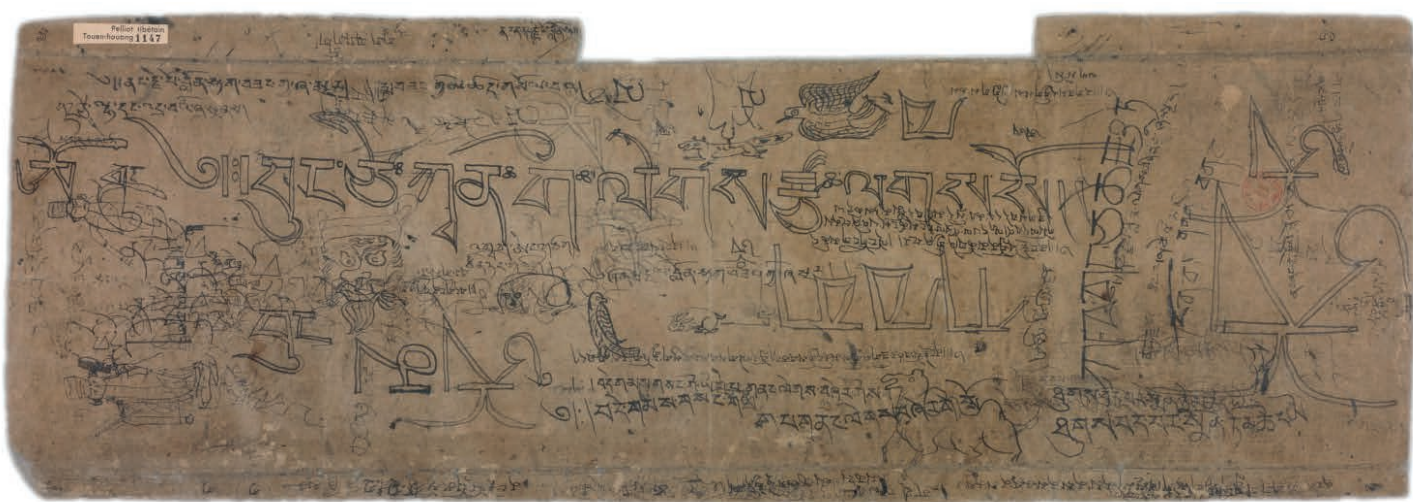
Social awareness and the connection between the sphere of social relations and theological concepts are deeply inscribed into the Jewish tradition and its most important authority, the Torah. This includes social relations in all their diversity and mutability, including immigrants and resident aliens. We might wonder how such a text have might been understood in the diaspora outside the Land of Israel? Recognizing and understanding these – and other – interconnections will help us to comprehend more precisely ancient systems of discourse and knowledge, which differ so profoundly from our own.



Rembrandt, Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard. 1637. Oil on panel. The Hermitage, St. Petersburg, Russia



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Tibetan Pelliot 1147, image courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES
ON LABOR DEPENDENCY:

SCRIBAL PRACTICES
IN DUNHUANG
UNDER TIBETAN
RULE

by Lewis Doney

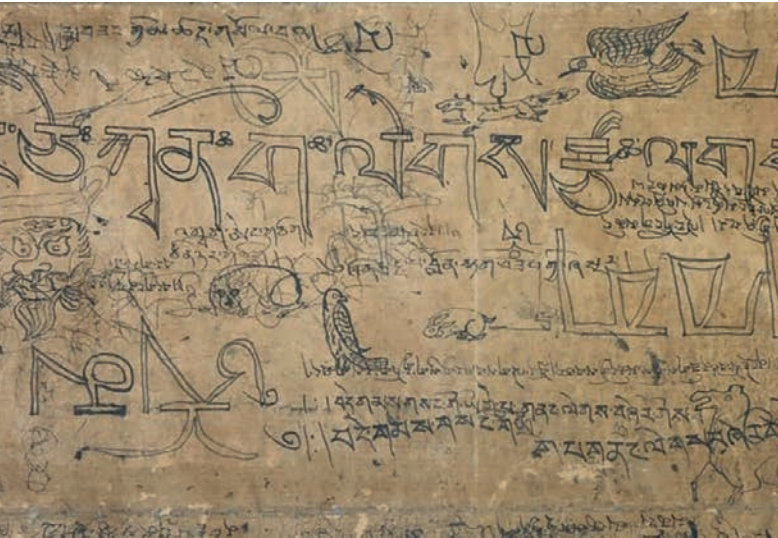
What is it like to live on the periphery of an empire whose emperors do not share your ethnicity, but do share your religion? How does it feel to grow up in this system, to begin to work in it, and to live in a society far removed from the center of power but living with daily relations of dependency to other members of your social, religious and imperial environment? Looking at the references to one man of Chinese ethnicity in the region of Dunhuang under the control of the Tibetan empire offers some clues as to these relations, and what it was like to live with labor dependency in a religious context.

From 787 to 848, the Tibetan empire (ca. 600–850 CE) ruled over Dunhuang (敦煌), an area located in what is currently north-western China, but which in the seventh and eighth centuries lay on the Tibetan empire's northeastern border. Tibet had taken the area from Tang China (618–907, 唐), and it was mostly inhabited by ethnically Chinese people. Dunhuang was pivotal for trade and communication, since the northern and southern Silk Roads came together here before entering the Gansu Corridor, which led into the heartland of China and south to its capital, Chang'an (長安, today's Xi'an 西安). The empire split the population into relatively unaffected civil units (Tib. *dar pa'i sde*; Ch. simian buluo 絲綿部落) and military units (Tib. *rgod gyi sde*; Ch. *xingren buluo* 行人部落) that were more integrated into Tibetan imperial power structures. The civil units paid taxes, but remained relatively untouched by Tibetan culture, while the peasants, traders and artisans in the military units performed *corvée* labor (including recruitment as soldiers) in addition to their own work. The area was primarily Buddhist, and some monks and nuns (Tib. *lha ris*; Ch. sengni buluo 僧尼部落) may have been made to perform *corvée* labor including administration and scribal work. Ninth-century Tibetan

emperors gradually introduced new rules for both monastic and lay organizations of Buddhists there, and employed many of the monks and laity as scribes to copy Buddhist works for the spiritual benefit of the rulers. Works found at the beginning of the twentieth century at the Mogao cave complex near Dunhuang, which were walled up in the so-called "library cave," offer an unparalleled window into the world of early Tibetan Buddhist scriptoria, the relation of their scribes with each other, with the editors of Buddhist teaching texts, or sutras, that they copied, and with Tibetan imperial power right up to the emperors themselves. Yet, this evidence is still mostly fragmentary and disconnected and so cannot tell us everything we might wish about the religious and social lives of the scribes but rather glimpses of certain people and practices.



Dunhuang Caves ©Neil Schmid



Tibetan Pelliot 1147, close-up

One man found in some of these works, whose name is transcribed in Tibetan as Leng ho Pe'u tshon, was likely of Chinese ethnicity with the "surname" Linghu (令狐) living somewhere near Dunhuang in the ninth century. He is named as a scribe, a military citizen and the head of a military subunit from which were levied scribes to work copying Buddhist works for the emperors. He thus had some status, though was not an elite member of society and not able to escape working for the empire altogether. Leng ho Pe'u tshon was likely a lay person, though monks (probably more male than female) also worked as scribes as well as higher status sutra editors. When not employed—his was a good livelihood carrying some religious cachet but certainly no calling—he no doubt engaged in the regular life of society. He is also found signing and adding his seal to a contract together with others of a similar status. In this contract, he served as a witness to the hire of another person to transport the annual grain tribute, a form of *corvée* labor that the person hiring him wanted to avoid doing himself. Scribes appear in a number of loan and sale contracts, letters, and legal documents, as left behind on the writing boards (Tib. *glegs tshas*) on which they tested their nibbed pens and drafted secular and religious texts, wrote notes, witticisms and insults to pass the time. These same scribes also lent and borrowed other tools of the trade such as paper, ink, and knives, as well as sutra copies as we shall see below.

During the period of relatively light-handed Tibetan control over Dunhuang, some people (especially those in the military units) began to use the Tibetan language (both spoken and written) and took on Tibetan names. This was probably the result of a combination of push and pull factors: an intentional policy of what we might call "Tibetanization" by the Tibetan empire, combined with the fact that "becoming" Tibetan made life easier for the conquered population. Much the same approach was used in governing the newly conquered area: direct rule and a single law code were combined with flexibility on the ground in terms of which courts (secular or religious) Buddhist clerics in Dunhuang could appeal to—for example in disputes about breeches of their own contracts. Such an approach has been employed by many other successful empires, including the later Roman Empire.

However, an element that was unique to the mature "Mahayana" form of Buddhism popular at this time, with its multiple buddhas and paths to spiritual liberation, was the sanctification of the job of the military and labor practices of the scriptoria around Dunhuang. A passage from one Mahayana texts, the *Prajñāpāramitā* that espouses liberation through the "perfection of wisdom," states:

"When a son or daughter of a good family enters the front of a battlefield with the troops, if they sincerely recite the 'Prajñāpāramitā', they will not be hurt or killed by weapons. All their enemies will generate compassion; those who attempt to hurt them will naturally be defeated. It is not possible for them to die on the battlefield!"

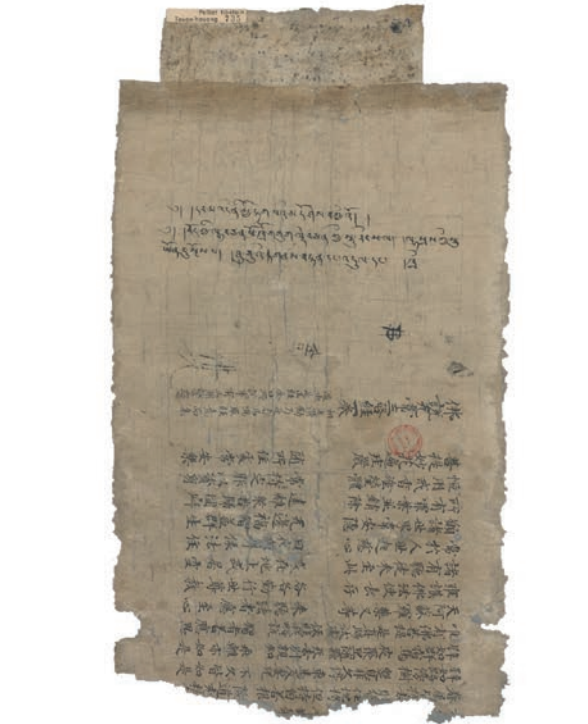
Another Mahayana work is a so-called incantation-text (Skt. *dhāraṇī*, Tib. *gzungs*, Ch. *tuoluoni* 陀羅尼) that gives the incantation of a buddha named Aparimitāyus as a means to liberation. The work is called the *Aparim-itāyurnāma-mahāyāna-sūtra* and it names some of the many benefits of this incantation, including that:

"Those who write, or cause to be written, these syllables or who write the whole text and keep it at home, even if their life is due to end (earlier) they will still be able to reach a hundred years old. Then after they die, they will be reborn in the buddha realm of the *tathāgata* (Buddha) Aparimitāyus."

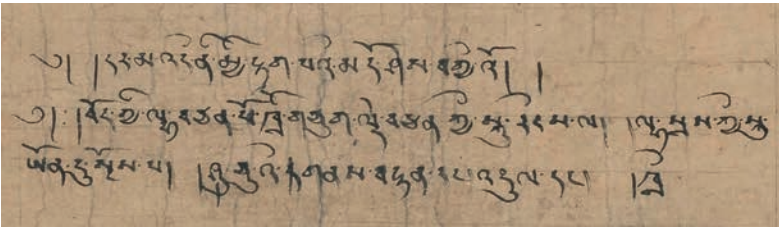
Many Tibetan and Chinese copies of both of these Buddhist works were produced around Dunhuang as part of a grand sutra-copying project initiated and funded by Emperor Khri gTsug lde brtsan (r. 815–841). The above sanctification of military and scribal work may have been among the reasons behind the choice of these exact works as the sutras to be copied, and they were written over both Indo-Tibetan style large sheets of paper called *pothi* (Skt. *pustaka*) and Chinese-style rolls (like scrolls but unrolled horizontally). For the scribes around Dunhuang, copying sutras was a means of making a livelihood, but also of ensuring religious and worldly benefits for both themselves and for the (imperial) sponsor for whom the sutras were copied.

At the end of a Chinese copy of another Mahayana work, the *Anīyatā-sūtra* (Ch. *Foshuo wuchang jing* 佛說無常經), a scribe jotted the following Tibetan dedication:

"This 'sūtra' is called the 'Anīyatā-sūtra'. During the reign of the Divine Emperor of Tibet, Khri gTsug lde brtsan, [the sutra is] dedicated for the benefit of [that] Divine Son."



Tibetan Pelliot 735, Chinese rendering of "Anīyatā-sūtra", image courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris



Tibetan Pelliot 735, close-up

By sponsoring the copying of sutras, the Tibetan emperor gave an offering to the religious community, benefiting them financially and the longevity and vitality of the dharma more spiritually. In return, scribes such as the one above would pass on to him the gift or benefit (Tib. *sku yon*, related to Skt. *dakṣiṇā*, Ch. *da chen* 達嚨) of the blessings, such as good karma, long life, improved or celestial rebirth, and everything else good that comes from copying the sutra. By the logic of this Mahayana thinking, the scribes themselves would at the same time also retain all of those good things. In some sources, they identified themselves as 'donors' or 'givers' (Tib. *sku yon pa*), in other words persons who offered a spiritual gift, and this role was acknowledged in some imperial sources. In transferring Buddhist merit directly to the emperor, the scribes not only did their jobs, but also performed their religious and labor identities through writing, the tool of their trade.

But such pious displays, and the logic of religious benefits resulting from scribes copying (or emperors sponsoring the copying of) sutras, did not prevent

very real practices of punishment and dependency in Dunhuang scriptoria. If they failed in their duties, scribes would be corporally punished, since the paper on which the sutras were written was valuable. Failure to hand in all the sheets a scribe had been given at the beginning of a project would also be punished with ten lashes per missing sheet of paper. Leng ho Pe'u tshon is mentioned in a list of 91 scribes copying a particular *Prajñāpāramitā* sutra as "the gift for the Divine Son," the Tibetan emperor. Together they owe 4,084 sheets to the official who oversaw the accounting and expenditure of paper (Tib. *rub ma pa*), meaning a lot of potential pain in addition to other unknown consequences for Leng ho Pe'u tshon and his fellow scribes. As a result, there is evidence for the existence of a paper economy in which scribes traded, loaned, and stole not only paper, ink, pens, and knives, but also the finished products, i.e. completed sutras. Given the length of the imperially-funded sutra-copying project in ninth-century Dunhuang, it is unlikely that a scribe who owed more and more paper or sutras could always be freed of their debt. This suggests the possibility of spirals of debt (in either currency, kind, or owed labor) to fellow scribes over the course of the early ninth century, which may only have ended when Tibetan control over Dunhuang itself came to an end. We lack evidence of what the concrete results of such spirals may have been, but in addition to whatever dangers of dependency were close at hand for in the scriptoria, the Dunhuang scriptoria themselves were in dependent positions as bodies of hired scribes under the rule of a distant emperor and his nearby military forces.

Finally, Leng ho Pe'u tshon and other scribes could get in trouble with higher powers because of excessive scribal mistakes. A note in the left margin of a discarded page from a *Prajñāpāramitā* sutra copy states, "Leng ho Pe'u tshon's discard, and also the chapter. Removed at re-edit from Monk Leng ce'u's group." Leng ce'u was a Buddhist cleric and an editor, found in numerous sutra copies, and it is evident from this note that he led a team (Tib. *gra*) of scribes and editors. Even though Leng ho Pe'u tshon was of some social status, as the head of one administrative unit used for levying scribes, this marginal note suggests he was removed from his duties as a scribe or cast out of a particular scribal-and-editorial team, or scriptorium because his errors meant that the group had to discard too many sheets of precious paper. We hear no more about him and his future life or means of livelihood, but in the connections to contracts, scriptoria, and systems of religious and imperial dependency of Leng ho Pe'u tshon and others like him, we are beginning to see the richness of life in ninth-century Dunhuang on the periphery of the Tibetan empire from a perspective not found in the imperially sanctioned edicts themselves.



whom Tibetans interacted within the wider Central Asian milieu, focusing on people at the borders of the Tibetan Empire (c. 600–850 CE). He also researches the later cultural effects of Buddhist literary depictions of the imperial period.

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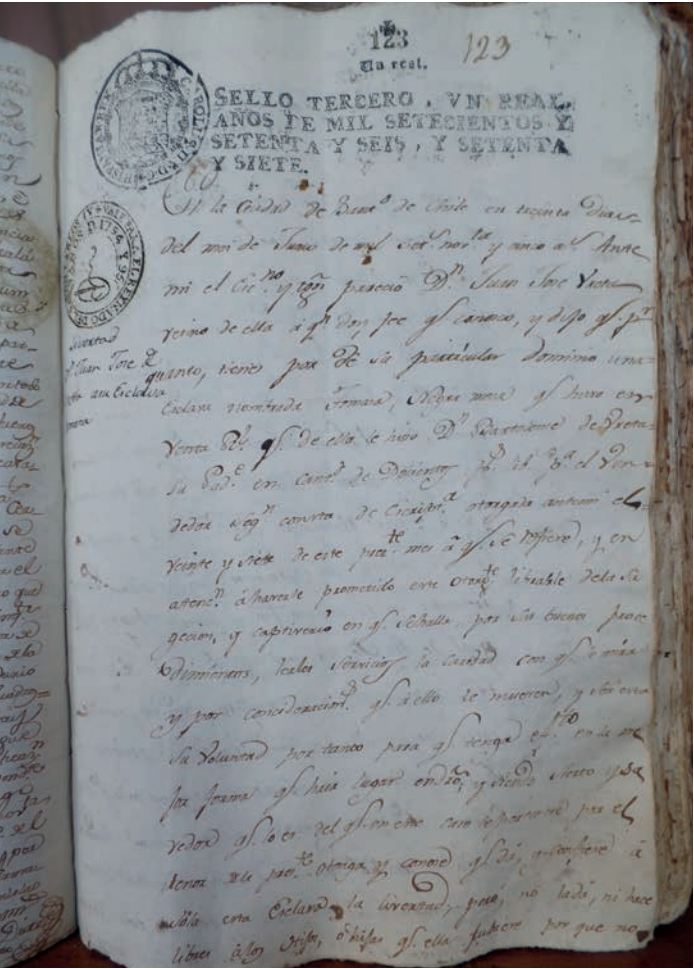


fig. 1: "confiere a sola esta esclava la libertad, pero no la da ni hace libres a los Hijos o hijas que ella tubiere". Letter of Freedom, 1795: Don Juan José Ureta to her slave Tomasa.

SERVITUDE, DOMESTIC WORK,
AFFECTIONS:
MANUMISSIONS OF
ENSLAVED WOMEN
IN COLONIAL
SPANISH AMERICA¹

by Carolina González Undurraga

The historiography of labor in colonial Latin America has focused on the so-called reproductive work, such as domestic work, thanks to research with a gender perspective. This has entailed the denaturalization of the complex productive/reproductive dichotomy. Within this movement, various forms of strong asymmetrical dependencies, such as enslaved labor, have also been addressed despite the existence of important research on the history of enslaved labor itself. In addition, studies on slavery from a gender perspective have contributed to the complexity of the conceptions of labor and, more specifically, of domestic work. But how did enslaved women appraise their own labor and freedom, as well as those of their daughters and granddaughters? What significance does this hold with regard to existing research on manumissions in modern-colonial societies?

In my view, addressing these questions is relevant in trying to understand the experiences of enslaved women of African and indigenous origin in the modern-colonial period because their labor was not only destined for domestic work, but also because their bodies (particularly their wombs) sustained a large part of the very (re)production of slavery under the legal principle of *partus sequitur ventrem*, which was used by different European empires. This is what Jennifer Morgan identified as "heritability" in understanding the experiences of enslaved women of African origin in the Atlantic World. Thus, racialized women were central to modern-colonial slavery in its different variants, and the domestic labor of servants, such as enslaved women, sustained colonial societies both symbolically and materially. In the case of slavery, it should be kept in mind that the domestic character of labor refers to the use of female enslaved labor – in this case, to perform certain tasks such as cooking, washing, running errands, and being a wet nurse, all of which are identified as part of reproductive labor – but also to the use of the labor of and with intimate relations, which is typical of relationships of asymmetrical dependency.

Feminist and decolonial studies have already problematized how contemporary domestic work implies, and is constituted by, "affective labor". In this regard, the proposal of Encarnación Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, who utilized the category of "domestic work-affective labor" to analyze current labor contexts of racialized migrant women in the European Union, gave particular emphasis to this point, saying: "the affective quality of reproductive labor by interrogating the organization of

paid and unpaid domestic work in private households (...) its main focus is on the affective dimension of the social”².

I believe that this is a relevant conceptual contribution to historical research since the enslaved women of the colonial period who performed domestic work were also gender-racialized, their subjectivities constituted by the “coloniality of gender” (*colonialidad de género*), as the decolonial feminist philosopher María Lugones once stated. Furthermore, research works on the processes of manumission in colonial Latin America have referred to the intimate and affective dimensions of enslaved domestic work. Examples include works published by historians like Michelle McKinley on the “fractional freedoms” in Lima in the 17th century; Adriana Chira, who coined the term “affective debt” for the cases of manumission in Santiago de Cuba in the 19th century; and also Magdalena Candiotti, who highlighted the ways to “appraise love” (*cotizar amor*) in manumissions in Río de la Plata during the first half of the 19th century.

Interestingly, this also happened in colonial Chile. Tomasa’s letter of freedom, which was granted in the capital, Santiago in 1795, stated that her manumission was because of her “loyal services”, but her womb could not be freed: “grants freedom to this slave only, but does not give it or set free the sons or daughters she may have” (see fig. 1). In other cases in the same city, freedom was also granted on account of the slave’s “particular assistance, good and loyal services”. This understanding of enslaved labor certainly exceeds the scope of formal legal repertoires. Moreover, as Raquel Gil Montero pointed out, the ambiguities and complexities of servile labor, such as in slavery, are evident due to “the juxtaposed meanings of coercion, freedom, slavery and servitude”.

Also, the judicial and social strategy of self-purchase stands out from various historical instances, and it seems to have motivated most women manumissions in late colonial Chile. One example is Dolores García, who bought her own freedom and that of her daughter for 370 pesos in 1802 (see fig. 2). Moreover, a majority of women of African descent managed their freedom in that particular way. Enslaved people were allowed to pay the price of their ransom in installments. To obtain the amount, a debt was contracted with their “masters” or a third party. A loan in money was to be paid with the same amount, either in money, or a part in money and another part with services, or entirely with services, which could be for an undetermined period or a specific period. The price could not be higher than that paid by the slave holder when he/she had bought the enslaved person, nor did it include taxes associated with the purchase and sale.



fig. 2: Letter of Freedom, 1802: Don Andres Ahumada in favor of his *criada* Dolores García and her daughter, in exchange for 370 pesos.

Therefore, the labor of enslaved women should be utilized to question the definitions of domestic work as well as the theoretical-methodological approaches in this regard. This would allow us to understand that the experiences of slavery, freedom, and the processes of manumission involved a valuation in money, services and also affection that enslaved women particularly made of their labor. Particular consideration should also be given to what a manumission entailed for these women, either through a “promise of freedom” or by buying their own freedom, or that of their daughters or granddaughters.

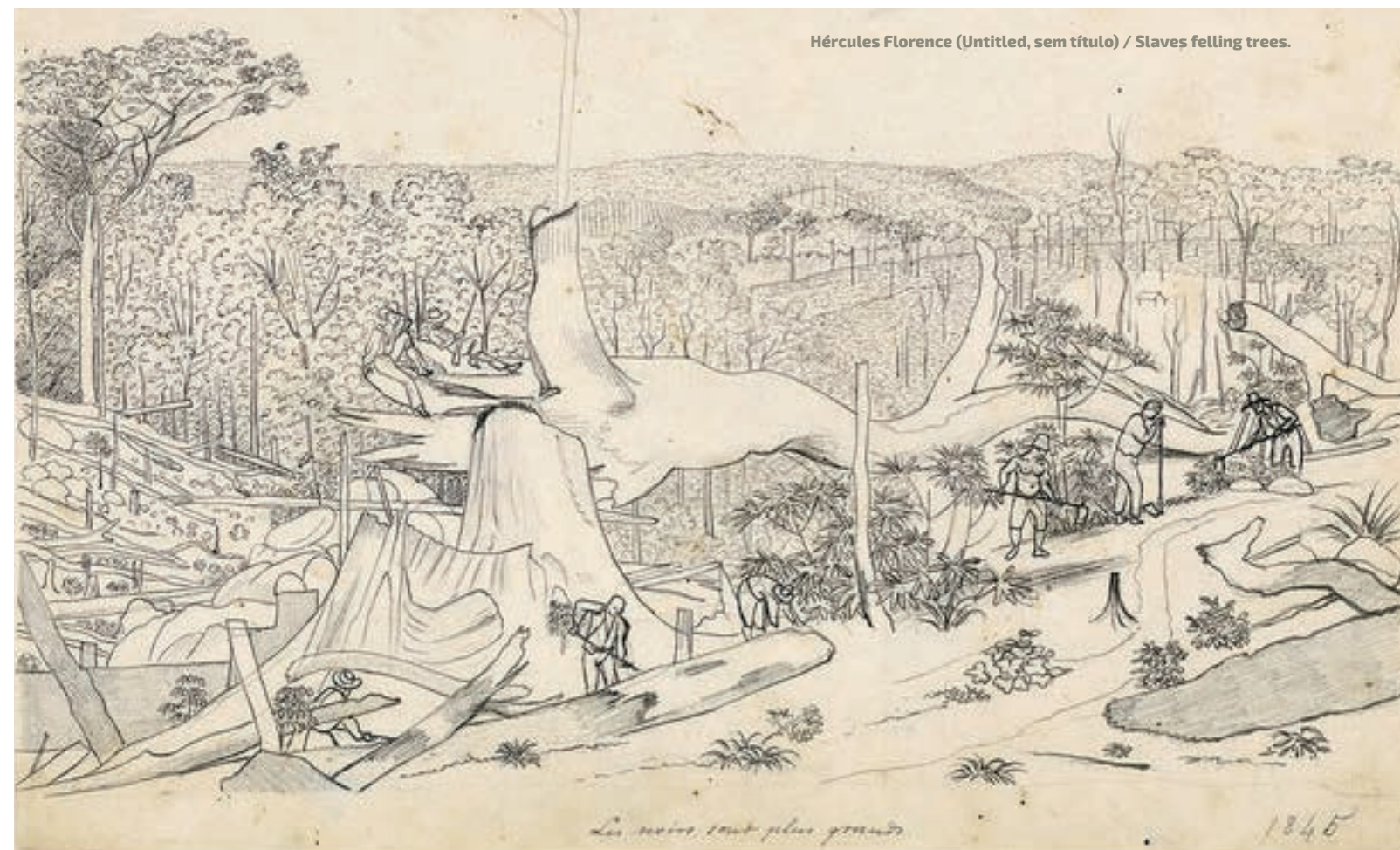
This is certain to open several questions about the implications of the “desire for freedom”, expressed in judicial and notarial documentation, and the ways of understanding the labor performed by enslaved women. In effect, this will entail a negotiation of the different meanings and practices of domestic work: firstly, by considering the labor performed; secondly, by taking into account both material and subjective asymmetric dependency relationships, which are characteristic of the culture of servitude and subordination in colonial Latin American society; and finally, by recognizing the gender-racialized markers that sustained the organization of work in the context of the societies of the modern-colonial world, although also, and in another form, in the present context.



Prof. Dr. Carolina González Undurraga

is professor at the Department of Historical Sciences at the University of Chile and a Heinz Heinen senior fellow at the BCDSS this semester. Her current research aims to analyze the value in money, services and affection that enslaved-freed women of

African descent made of their own domestic work in order to obtain manumission in Santiago (Chile) between 1770 and 1823. More broadly, this project is involved in the forms of inscription and erasure of history and memory found within the gender-racialized colonial archive.



SLAVES AND SLAVERY REGIMES

REAL WORKS IN COMMODITY PRODUCTION ON AMERICAN PLANTATIONS

by Michael Zeuske

As part of Research Area D (Labor and Spatiality) of our Center, I have been researching the work of slaves, especially in the Americas, for years. My current project is a book on the real work enslaved people carried out across all Americas, looking especially at the most important slave-produced commodities. I will leave out mining, especially large-scale gold mining because this was a very specialized form of work.

The most important commodities in cultivation and production included sugar, tobacco, cocoa, coffee, indigo and cotton, as well as wood, and animals for meat production. The production of commodities with masses of slaves and animals in turn led to the cultivation of animal feed (mainly guinea grass) and foodstuffs such as corn, yuca/mandioca, rice, bananas and grain. The commodities and foods were mainly cultivated and produced on plantations and large estates (*hatos/ranches*). In addition, there was a gigantic service sector in cities and ports. All of this can be summarized in the words of the groundbreaking historian of US mass slavery, Ira Berlin, “Slaves worked. [...] After all, slavery was first and foremost an institution of coerced labor. Work necessarily engaged most slaves, most of the time.”¹

There has (with some few exceptions) been surprisingly little research in recent years about these special dimensions of work and the real activities of slaves, the working instruments, and the working animals.



Florence, "Engenho da Caxoeira, corte da cana", 1868.

Crops or commodities were mostly planted in tropical forest areas, so the main tasks consisted of felling and burning trees and removing plants and roots by chopping and digging. The main tools used were axes, hatchets, and hoes. Only slaves in sugar production also used heavy machetes (*mochas*) during harvest. In the sugar plantations of Cuba, heavy digging sticks made of solid wood (*jan*, plural: *janes*) were used, which were often reinforced with an iron point. All other commodities were picked by hand (coffee, cotton) or mowed with a kind of sickle (indigo), and cut into small pieces (tobacco, cocoa), sometimes with smaller machetes or blades on sticks. The most commonly used slave tool on commodity plantations was the hoe

(*azada*, *guataca*), followed by axes or hatchets and cleavers or cutlasses (machetes). Only cotton slaves were not "armed" with machetes; they only had carving knives. Aside from the actual harvest periods, the majority of enslaved workers in the Americas spent their lives hacking and hoeing. This is why hoes (*guatacas*) play such an important role in Caribbean music as rhythm instruments using hoes and barrels as instruments.



Richard Bridgens, "Field Negro. Sugar in the Background" 1836.

Sugar was the most important commodity in modern history in the Atlantic hemisphere, and its influence extended into the eastern hemisphere and East Asia. Besides, there was cocoa, tobacco (cigars) and coffee, and from the 1820s onwards cotton, rum, and tea. The competition from European beet sugar led to the establishment of huge sugar factories in the center of different sugar plantations (*centrales*) from around 1870 onwards. Between roughly 1880 and 1910, the *centrales* *Constancia* and *Caracas* in south-central Cuba near Cienfuegos were the two largest rural industrial complexes in the world.

The first sugar plantations were planted in the fifteenth century on West African islands (the Canary Islands and São Tomé). Over the next three centuries, they spread westwards to the European colonies in the Caribbean and to the continental Americas. On the sugar plantations of the island of Saint-Domingue (modern Haiti), the only successful revolution of slaves and free colored people broke out in 1791.

The real work in sugar and other commodities can be divided into four main work stages. The first was land reclamation and the construction of canals, dykes, and infrastructure. This applies to all colonial and post-colonial plantations. The extremely difficult and dangerous work of land clearing was mostly done by gangs of specialized ax-wielding slaves; they were always young men led by an experienced older slave. The second stage was planting, growing, and caring for the plants. In an era before chemical pesticides, this required perpetual hacking and hoeing by nearly the entire enslaved workforce in the plantation economy. Many slaves hacked all their lives.

During the third stage, harvesting and initial processing took place. This was the peak season for plantation farming, as well as the most labor- and time-intensive phase of the plantation economy.

The fourth phase was industrial processing and transportation. Only in the case of sugar did industrial processing – in Cuba and in Brazil up to the final stage of the branded product, white sugar – take place on the plantation. That's why a complete industrial revolution only took place in sugar under the conditions of colonial slavery (Second Slavery): production of white sugar, transport, and storage in ports. On the *centrales*, sugar was even transported on small industrial railroads. Only under the pressure of competition from beet sugar did a certain degree of de-industrialization occur around the 1870s, leading to the massive production of brown



Ingenio Ácana, 1857.

raw sugar in the huge *centrales* mentioned above, and exporting it and molasses for rum production to other areas (mostly to United States).

In cotton, the ripe cotton balls had to be torn from the plant's hard shells by hand (often causing injury) and, under extreme gang-work pressure, placed in shoulder sacks and carried to larger baskets at the end of the row. At the end of the day, each individual picker's baskets were weighed. Balls of cotton were ginned to separate the cotton fibers from the seeds, a highly work-intensive operation. After it had been cleaned and dried, the cotton was pressed into large bales and packed into four- to five-hundred-pound packs for transport by the Mississippi steamers and export.

Coffee cherries were laboriously picked individually with three fingers or stripped from the branches by hand (also with many injuries) and taken in smaller baskets to large baskets at the end of each row. This work was often done by enslaved women and children. The coffee cherries were then laboriously dried and/or the beans removed from the flesh of the cherries with water or mechanical mills (*taona*), polished, selected (for size, and quality) and packed in coffee barrels (until about 1840) and coffee sacks for export. The roasting and packaging for individual sale took place elsewhere. The ripe yellow tobacco leaves were cut from the plant, dried in a complex process (hanging on long wooden sticks first in the open, then in tobacco kilns), fermented under the influence of heat, sometimes with special broths (rotten tobacco residue broth with admixtures, usually a mix with sugar molasses), "spiced," packed and exported in tobacco bales. Further processing took place in special manufactories and/or factories far from the plantations by free workers such as the heroine of Georges Bizet's opera "Carmen."

Working hours on commodity plantations were basically tied to daylight, i.e., they were very long and hard. In addition, enslaved workers always had their own small subsistence farms to work (slave gardens, *conucos*, which tied slaves to the plantation and was intended to reduce the cost of food production). Most people were woken up at 5.00 a.m. The works of the day were distributed by supervisor. The slaves got some rum or coffee. At around 6.00 a.m. the slaves marched to the fields. There was a small breakfast of coffee and corn or *farina* (yuca/mandioca, mostly with beans) around 10.00 or 11.00 a.m. At noon, in the greatest heat, there was a break of one and a half or two hours, and food (mostly rice, corn, yuca/mandioca with plantains or fried bananas, malanga, boniato, etc.), fried dried meat (*tasajo*, *charque* or *tampique*, *tampico* jerky = cured meat) or dried fish (*bacalao*, *bacalhau*). Then the slaves worked on until dusk and sometimes even beyond, at torchlight. In sugar, gang-work in the fields

prevailed from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, controlled by *mayorales* (mostly white supervisors) and *capataces* (direct gang-overseers, mostly slaves); it became more and more stringent with the industrialization of Second Slavery. Each new overseer tried to improve performance, so overseer kills were relatively common.



"Corte, alza y tiro".

The individual tasks in sugar harvesting and processing were extremely varied and often highly specialized. During the sugar harvest, the main tasks were the cutting and loading of sugar cane. The entire process consisted of the following tasks: *corte*, *alza* y *tiro* (cutting, loading and transport by oxcart. The task of the slaves, including enslaved women, in beating the sugar cane (*corte*) was simple only in so far as it consisted of three or four basic movements that were repeated over and over: it was laborious and difficult work.²



"Esquifación masculina [machetero] / Slave clothing male".

"Esquifación femenina / Slave clothing female".

During harvest, work in the sugar fields lasted 12-14 hours, from sunrise to sunset and at times even longer. The second operation in the sugar harvest was *alza*, the loading of the canes onto two-wheeled, high-sided oxcarts (*carretas*).³ This work was often done by women or children (from the age of about 10) and people with infirmities, as was collecting chopped-up



"ISLA DE CUBA.-Recolección de la caña de azúcar en un ingenio".

pieces of sugar cane. The third step in specialized work, the *tiro*, included the transport of the cut sugar cane. The *tiro* was done by the strongest men (*boyeros*), who also had to be able to handle the oxen. All these operations can be seen in the *costumbrista* painting *Corte de caña* (1874) by Víctor Patricio de Landaluze (1828-1889). The *boyeros* were not chosen because the work of driving the oxcart was particularly difficult, but because this was a high-status job in the hierarchy of the slaves, and because the *boyeros'* working hours often were twice as long. For this they got privileges.



Víctor Patricio Landaluze, "Corte de Caña", 1874. Víctor Patricio Landaluze, "Corte de Caña", 1874.

As darkness descended, the *boyeros* often moved from the fields to the *casa del trapiche* (mill house) or the *casas de caldera* (boiling house), i.e., into the *sector fabril*, the factory sector on all sugar plantations in buildings with machinery and working spaces. They operated the extremely dangerous crushing mills, or worked in the *casas de caldera* where the cane was cooked in unbearable heat. There, they stirred the hot syrup with huge ladles and removed impurities and limescale.⁴ Each shift in the *casas de caldera*, the



"Vista de una Casa de Calderas"

secaderos (drying houses), or *casas de purga* (purging houses, where the sugar was placed in clay molds for sugar loaves and the remaining molasses drained away) worked eight hours; but some *boyeros* worked up to 18 hours a day during *zafra*. There was a terrible noise and heat in the factories, especially in the mill itself, creating hellish working conditions. Some workers and even *boyeros* died from exhaustion and lack of sleep.

In 1859, the US-American lawyer, abolitionist and politician Richard Dana wrote an account of his recent trip to Cuba, in which he described the smells, engines and sounds of the sugar harvest – and incidentally, the contemporary attitudes to enslaved people, even among otherwise progressive thinkers: "The smell of juice and of sugar-vapor, in all its stages, is intense. The negroes fatten on it. The clank of the engine, the steady grind of the machines, and the high, wild cry of the negroes at the caldrons to the stokers at the furnace doors, as they chant out their directions or wants—now for more fire, and now to scatter the fire—which must be heard above the din, 'A-a-b'la! A-a-b'la!' 'E-e-cha candelal!' 'Pu-er-tal!', and the barbaric African chant and chorus of the gang at work filling the cane-troughs—all these make the first visit at the sugar-house a strange experience. But after one or two visits, the monotony is as tiresome as the first view is exciting. There is, literally, no change in the work. There are the same noises of the machines, the same cries from negroes at the same spots, the same intensely sweet smell, the same state of the work in all its stages, at whatever hour you visit it, whether in the morning, or evening, at midnight, or at the dawn of the day. If you wake up at night, you hear the 'A-a-b'la! A-a-b'la!' 'E-e-cha! E-e-cha!' of the caldron-men crying to the stokers, and the high, monotonous chant of the gangs filling the wagons or the trough, a short, improvised stave, and then the chorus; - not a tune, like the song of sailors at the tackle and falls, but a barbaric, tuneless intonation."⁵



Prof. Dr. Michael Max Paul Zeuske

was Professor of Iberian and Latin American History at the University of Cologne (1993-2018), Professor of History (University of Havana,

2018-2019) and is Principal Investigator at the BCDSS. He is a corresponding member of the Academia de la Historia, Havana, Cuba, and of the Academia Nacional de la Historia, Venezuela. He focuses on forms of dependency in the Atlantic slavery (1400-1900), in the global history of slavery and in different local slaveries and slave trades on a micro-historical level as well as on life histories of enslaved people and slave traders.



Map of San Domingo, ca. 1750, British Library

RECONSTRUCTING AN 18TH CENTURY COFFEE PLANTATION IN FRENCH SAINT-DOMINGUE

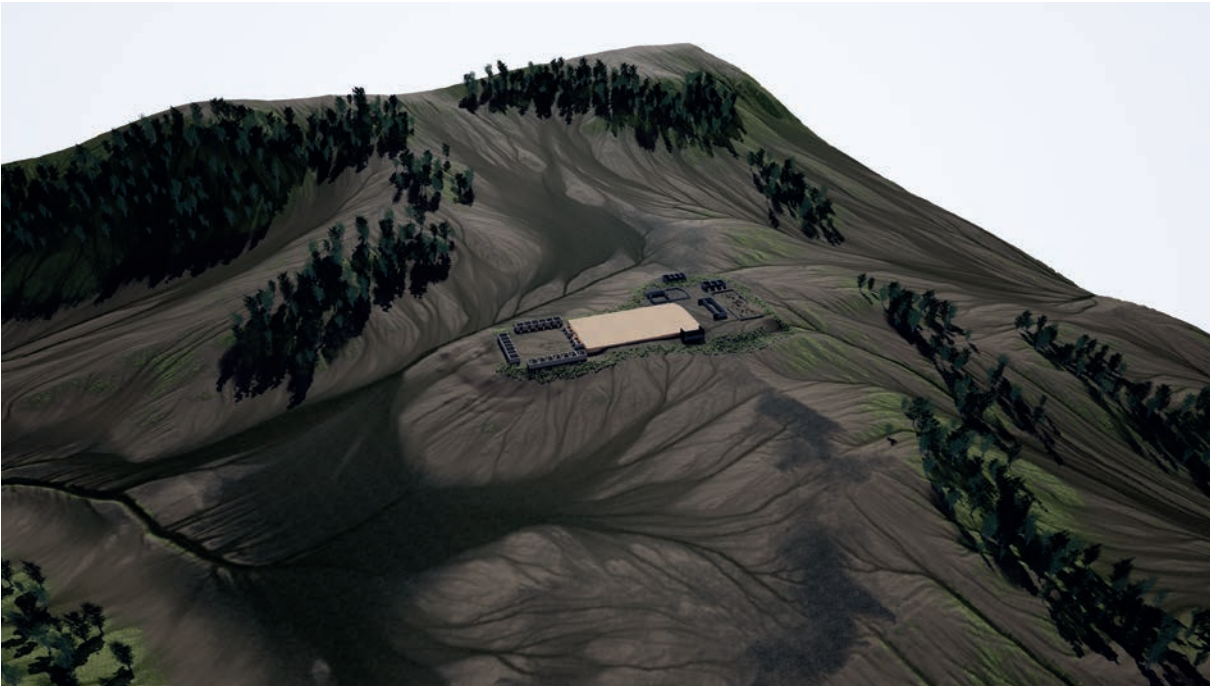
by Alexa Voss

This is a report on a 3D reconstruction project of the Dion coffee plantation in French Saint-Domingue. The project "Atlas of the history of slavery in the French and Spanish territories of Santo Domingo from the 16th century to the end of the 18th century" is directed by Prof. Dr. Michael Zeuske and coordinated by myself. This aim is to give a clearer and more tangible insight into life and work in and around such an 18th century coffee plantation.

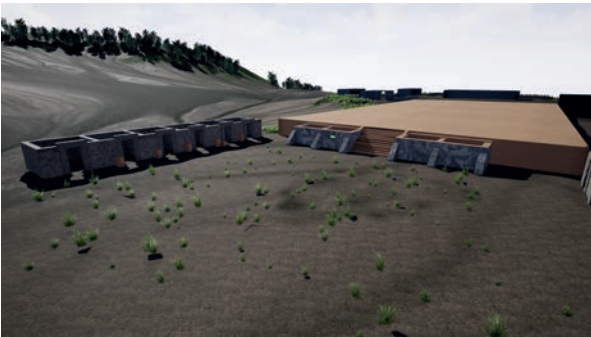
The reconstruction project was developed by the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) in cooperation with the Bonn Center for Digital Humanities (BCDH). Dr. Matthias Lang, director of the BCDH, and his colleague Phillippe Kluge are responsible for the technical realization of the 3D model, while I, as the coordinator of the project, provide information on the coffee plantation. Thanks to the work of doctoral student Gabriela Martinez, we obtained access to sources that have not been processed until now. They reveal a new picture of how the buildings in Dion had been used and also shed new light on their owners and their own stories.

BACKGROUND

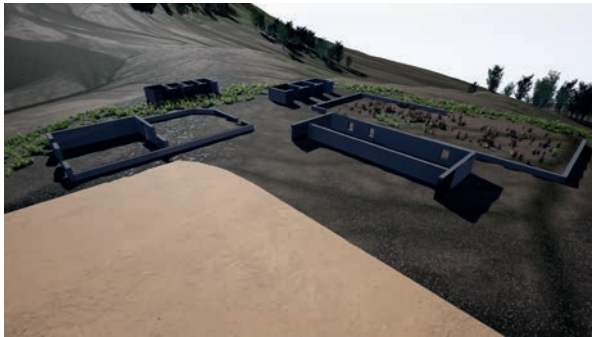
Dion coffee plantation is the name given to architectural remains found in the west of present-day Haiti. These remains date back to the 18th century, when the territory of present-day Haiti was still the French colony of Saint-Domingue. In the same century, the coffee plant became the rival of the sugar cane plant. Coffee cultivation meant many social and economic changes.



Dion 4, 3D model illustration



Dion 2, 3D model illustration



Dion 3, 3D model illustration

These also influenced the slave market and the lives of the slaves themselves. During the colonial period, the mountain ranges were sought out by fugitive slaves to form small hidden communities. Some slaves sought only a form of freedom, while others formed groups to organize raids on the plantations in order to free more slaves and seize weapons and other utilitarian tools of labor.

Dion is located in the Les Matheux mountain range, and the construction of this plantation in the mountains epitomized a challenge for the colonial rulers as Les Matheux was also known as a slave retreat. The construction method used for the plantations in the mountains was changed to provide protection against the cold at high altitudes, but essentially to protect against runaway slaves. For these reasons, all the buildings were made of stone, including the slave quarters. The best preserved are in Dion, and the architectural remains found there give a picture of the whole complex. Dion is also located in the largest natural reserve

of Haiti, and the authorities are trying to protect culture and nature in this area to develop sustainable tourism and improve the quality of life of the current population with several projects.

Based on this premise, we created a project dedicated to the 3D reconstruction of this colonial-era plantation. A presentation of the historical data will accompany the 3D model, which will be made available as a video to universities, museums and the National Park itself. Our results will also be used in a project involving the reforestation and cultivation of new coffee plants for the production of organic coffee.

COFFEE PLANTATIONS IN HISPANIOLA

The coffee plant was first brought to Hispaniola by the Jesuits from the island of Martinique in 1725. There, its cultivation experienced rapid growth, and the years 1770–1780 are considered to be the period of the first coffee boom. According to Moreau de Saint-Méry, there were 3117 coffee plantations in the French part of His-



Remains Field Slaves Quarters



Remains Master House



Remains Mill

paniola (French: Saint-Domingue) in 1791, which represented 60% of the cultivated land. By the 18th century, coffee strongly rivaled sugar as an export commodity, and so coffee plantations became an important pillar of the colonial economy.

Some of the consequences of this growth include the emergence of new plantation owners, as well as a large increase in slave imports accompanied by a sharp rise in the price of slaves.

Another aspect was the valorization of a part of the natural area that had previously found less use: the mountainous regions of the island, which were ideal for the coffee plant as it grows on higher ground and in a more humid and cooler climate. The use of the mountain regions also brought about a change in the architecture of the new plantations. People protected themselves from the cooler climate with more solid, stone-built shelters. Since the mountain ranges represented the territory of the fugitive slaves, which meant that the coffee plantations were now built in the middle of the

slave retreat, the slave shelters were built like prisons to guarantee their surveillance. The harshness of the labor to which the slaves were subjected gave rise to concerns that it would encourage further escapes.

During the turmoil of the revolution, many coffee plantation owners fled to Cuba. The design of the coffee plantations there followed the basic plan from Saint-Domingue. The coffee plantations of the "French-Haitian" type were classified as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO in 2000.

Since coffee plantations played such an important role in colonial America and represented a turning point in terms of the keeping of slaves, the project of reconstructing such a plantation in 3D was born. The Dion coffee plantation in Haiti (French Saint-Domingue) seemed to be very suitable for this purpose.

THE REMAINS OF THE COFFEE PLANTATION OF DION

Dion Coffee Plantation is the name given to the architectural remains found in the mountain range of Les Matheux, in present-day Haiti. This mountain range in the western part of the island was considered a slave retreat during colonial times, and so building a plantation in this area was a challenge for the colonial masters. Thus, stone slave shelters with a door were built. Those of Dion are the best preserved from this period. The other remains are also very well preserved, which is why we chose Dion for our project. Another advantage of this choice is that other scientists before us have cleared the site of overgrown vegetation, made plans, and described the remains. Aerial photographs, photos and GPS data are also available.

PRECEDING WORK

- 2009

Archaeological investigations were carried out in a collaboration between the Institut de Sauvegarde du Patrimoine Nationale, ISPAN, and two Cuban archaeologists. In the same year, a road through the mountain range Les Matheux was completed. This allowed good access to the ruins of Dion.
- 2012

A project for the conservation and valorization of the ruins was created, as well as a plan to improve the living conditions of the local population. This included reforestation, renewed cultivation of organic coffee and the reconstruction of cisterns.
- 2017-18

Access roads were repaired and restoration work on the ruins was undertaken
- 2020

Dion was incorporated into Haiti's largest national park

Haitian authorities would like to see further work on the history of Dion and more archaeological excavations in the future. Our project was therefore gratefully received.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED SO FAR

We started by collecting the already-existing data on Dion and began a collaboration with a Haitian PhD student, Gabriela Martinez. She was working on the colonial sites in the Les Matheux area. Through this collaboration, we obtained new photographic materials and other colonial documents. The analysis of these shed a whole new light on the history of Dion and the use of the buildings. The interpretation of the remains published by the Institut de Sauvegarde du Patrimoine Nationale, ISPAN (the national heritage agency), was still incomplete, but now we can rewrite history and create a historically accurate reconstruction of the ruins in 3D. This is a great success for us. The basic plans, GPS data and the new, more precise photos allowed us to complete the first part of the 3D representation. To reconstruct the exterior part of the plantation, we used the explanations of an English coffee plantation owner during the time when the English occupied the city of Port-au-Prince in Saint-Domingue. His work was intended to serve as a guide for coffee cultivation in Jamaica. Our project is half completed so far. We will keep you updated!

RECOMMENDED READING

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Moreau de Saint-Méry, M.L.E., 1797-98, Description Topographique, Physique, Civile, Politique et Historique de la Partie Francaise de l'Isle Saint-Domingue, Philadelphia.



Dr. Alexa Voss
studied Ancient American Cultures and Geography at the Universities of Bonn and Hamburg. Her research focus was on human-space relations. For many years she has worked at anthropological museums in Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, directed excavations and taught archaeology at the University of Santo Domingo (UASD). She was also involved in the development of museums and served as an advisor for culture in various ministries. Today she works at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies and is the coordinator of the project „Atlas of the history of slavery in the French and Spanish territories of Santo Domingo from the 16th century to the end of the 18th century“ (directed by Prof. Dr. Zeuske).



Philippe Kluge
specializes in spatial humanities, with a focus on 3D documentation and visualization. Trained in surveying and geoinformatics, he was research assistant at the Bonn Center for Digital Humanities (BCDH) at the time this report was written. In December 2021 he took on the position of developer at the "Virtual Collaboration Project" of Bonn University.



T-shirt quality check at a RMG factory in Bangladesh

BANGLADESH'S READY-MADE GARMENTS SECTOR REBOUND:

REVISITING GENDERED LABOR PRECARIITY AND DEPENDENCY

by Abu Faisal Md Khaled and Anas Ansar

Thousands of ready-made garment (RMG) workers, frequently seen as Bangladesh's lifeline for economic growth and poverty alleviation, were sacked arbitrarily just weeks after the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak. The widespread cancellation of existing orders, followed by factory closures and worker layoffs, triggered an unprecedented crisis for RMG workers, the vast majority of whom are women. In addition, the pandemic exposed the deficiencies in globalized supply chains and the resulting structural precarity. These have served as a wake-up call for reform, and they have also brought attention to the distinctive impact suffered by RMG workers during this time, highlighting the alarming conditions that many of them face in Bangladesh, the vulnerability of their livelihoods, and the widespread gender inequality that persists within the industry's unregulated labor practices.

As the industry slowly recovers from the initial upheaval and on moves on its way to a rebound, we revisit the impacts of the pandemic on the RMG workers in Bangladesh, who predominantly hail from impoverished rural regions of the country. We also seek to refocus scholarly attention, through a longer article that we previously published, to the wider global clothing manufacturing pattern that has long been associated with labor precarity. With this growing nexus between structural inequalities and gendered labor precarity, this article serves as our contribution to the emerging literature on the pandemic's implications on the already-fragile labor sector in the global South.

WOMEN AND THE PANDEMIC

“Docile, nimble-fingered and willing to work for very little”

The RMG industry is characterized by a web of suppliers and subcontractors operating in different countries and regions, with a number of influential retailers and brands at the top of the supply chain. The conceptual underpinnings derive from the inequality and hierarchy that dominate the global economy and value chain. Multinational clothing giants based in the global North can exploit laborers in the global South because of how the industry is structured in a globalized supply chain, (re)producing relations of dependency and leaving workers in developing nations especially vulnerable, which became further evident during the pandemic. The highly mobile nature of outsourcing and manufacturing practices has led to substantial shifts in the division of labor, as seen in the rise of an assembly line predominated by the third-world female labor force. Bangladesh is part of the global labor value chain that relies on the

“presumptive labor subjectivity of ‘third world women’ – docile, nimble-fingered and willing to work for very little”.

Gendered vulnerabilities

Studies of women's participation in Bangladesh's formal economic sectors indicate that working outside the home benefits women as it frees them from the confines of the home and the pitfalls of unpaid domestic duties. Consequently, despite social pressures, women are willing to migrate from the countryside to the city to work in the RMG sector, which indicates this industry's importance to the economic well-being of rural households.



Bangladesh RMG workers protesting in the Capital Dhaka to demand better working condition

Employment in the garment industry helps to reduce poverty while simultaneously boosting the social acceptability of women's engagement in the formal economy. The economic opportunities provided by

the industry have boosted women's confidence and increased their ability to make decisions, with long-term benefits reaching extended families via social remittances. Furthermore, garment workers, in most cases, are internal migrants from rural Bangladesh and are often the only breadwinners. Rural women migrating to work in the industry also have more autonomy in non-economic aspects of their lives, such as in marriage and family planning. Thus, the steady growth of the sector has been positively correlated with decreasing birth rates and child marriages and a substantial increase in girls' school attendance. Women who work in the RMG sector are less likely to marry young and have significantly more independence and likelihood of upward social mobility.

However, the pandemic undermined such strides that had promoted the empowerment of women. The adverse gender effects of the pandemic include a profound increase in rural poverty, the slowing down of progress in eliminating gender inequality, the generation of reverse migration, and the negative impact on female workers' decision-making abilities.

POWER ASYMMETRIES AND INEQUALITY IN THE CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL ECONOMY

A corpus of studies has already started to unravel the drivers behind the pervasive trends of socio-economic inequality in the global political economy. However, the pandemic and its manifold impacts are a stark reminder of the reluctance of the involved stakeholders to rethink these ongoing labor practices, thereby allowing inequality to spread uncontested.

The pandemic brought to light pre-existing power imbalances between merchants and manufacturers, as well as structural inequities such as a lack of sustainability and uneven bargaining power. Following the outbreak, many large retailers declined to accept orders that had been completed and delivered, including the orders still in production. As a result, many Bangladeshi RMG manufacturers were on the brink of bankruptcy because Western retailers owed factories \$5 billion in outstanding orders, the bulk of which had already been completed and delivered. Many were forced to shut down permanently and could not return to business as we were writing our paper. Moreover, retailers wanted significant concessions off the contract price they had already agreed upon with the manufacturers. Major retailers used the force majeure clauses to revoke or terminate shipments.

Workers are disproportionately affected by power imbalances between retailers and manufacturers, who in turn seek to alleviate the strain by subcontracting, allowing them to shift the burden of pricing pressure

and aggressive output deadlines onto workers. This results in low-wage, insecure work environments with long hours, few benefits, and chronic livelihood uncertainty. The arbitrary dismissal of at least 1 million workers without pay, which we discussed in our study, highlights a larger pattern of inequality and unsustainability that characterizes the industry. Workers thus find themselves in a precarious position as a result of the power asymmetry, which is further reinforced by the constant threat of orders being relocated from Bangladesh.



RMG Workers protesting arbitrary dismissal of colleagues during the pandemic in Bangladesh

ON THE JOURNEY TO RECOVERY

As the RMG industry exhibits indications of a rebound, it is crucial to prioritize reforming the textile and garment supply chain in order to improve labor conditions and promote sustainability, which could guarantee the industry's long-term viability. The sustainability of the industry is subject to the collective efforts of various stakeholders, including consumers, retailers, and manufacturers. Although efforts have been made to revive the economy and implement contingency plans, it is important to consider that the global fashion industry has undergone significant changes in the post-pandemic phase due to the shifting characteristics of the global economy, the rapid pace of automation, and, most notably, potential changes in consumer behavior in response to the crisis. These developments may result in major changes in the sector, which would obligate manufacturers to adapt to these new realities in order to remain competitive while protecting workers' rights and promoting sustainability. Since late 2022, Bangladesh has been making a solid comeback in export. However, in post-pandemic policies, workers' issues still need to be addressed as export figures alone cannot dominate such a rebound.

Thus, addressing the pandemic's lingering micro and macro effects necessitates a more holistic approach. Going beyond the simplistic analysis of factory owner vs. worker relations, we recommend revisiting the broader domain of structural and social hierarchies, complex mechanisms, and the actors at play as a

way forward on this journey to recovery after a major disruption. The transformation has to be in partnership with various stakeholders, including manufacturers, international buyers, worker representatives, and the government. Reforming the current structure and the sector's functioning is necessary for the sustainability and protection of millions of workers. We also need a re-orientation of the current labor framework, along with a more grounded and intersectional understanding of labor, gender, and the role of states and the international community in this process. To ensure that the garment industry's contribution to the country's socio-economic landscape is sustainable in the post-pandemic era, the industry needs to invest in upskilling, vertical integration, and digitization in rebranding itself. It is also important to guarantee that workers and other stakeholders involved in the manufacturing process have access to formal social protection measures, which are still missing from the agenda. The pandemic-led disruption shows how detrimental the consequences can be without such a protection mechanism. Finally, it is essential to include women in the recovery process and to address the grievances of the millions of RMG workers.

A consistent policy and an international support mechanism are required to overcome structural weaknesses in the industry and reinvigorate the RMG sector. As we move forward, stakeholders need to seize this rebound as an opportunity to carefully review and agree on a pragmatic solution that would build on equality, justice, and sustainability for the future.

See full article in Asian Journal of Comparative Politics:



<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/20578911231170208>



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WHO WORKS AT THE CLUSTER? WHERE FROM? WHAT AREA?

The BCDSS work force (Cluster Professors, Lecturers, Postdocs, PhD Researchers, Management Team) according to country of origin

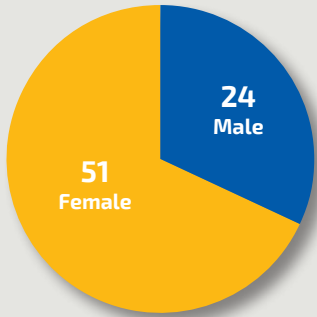
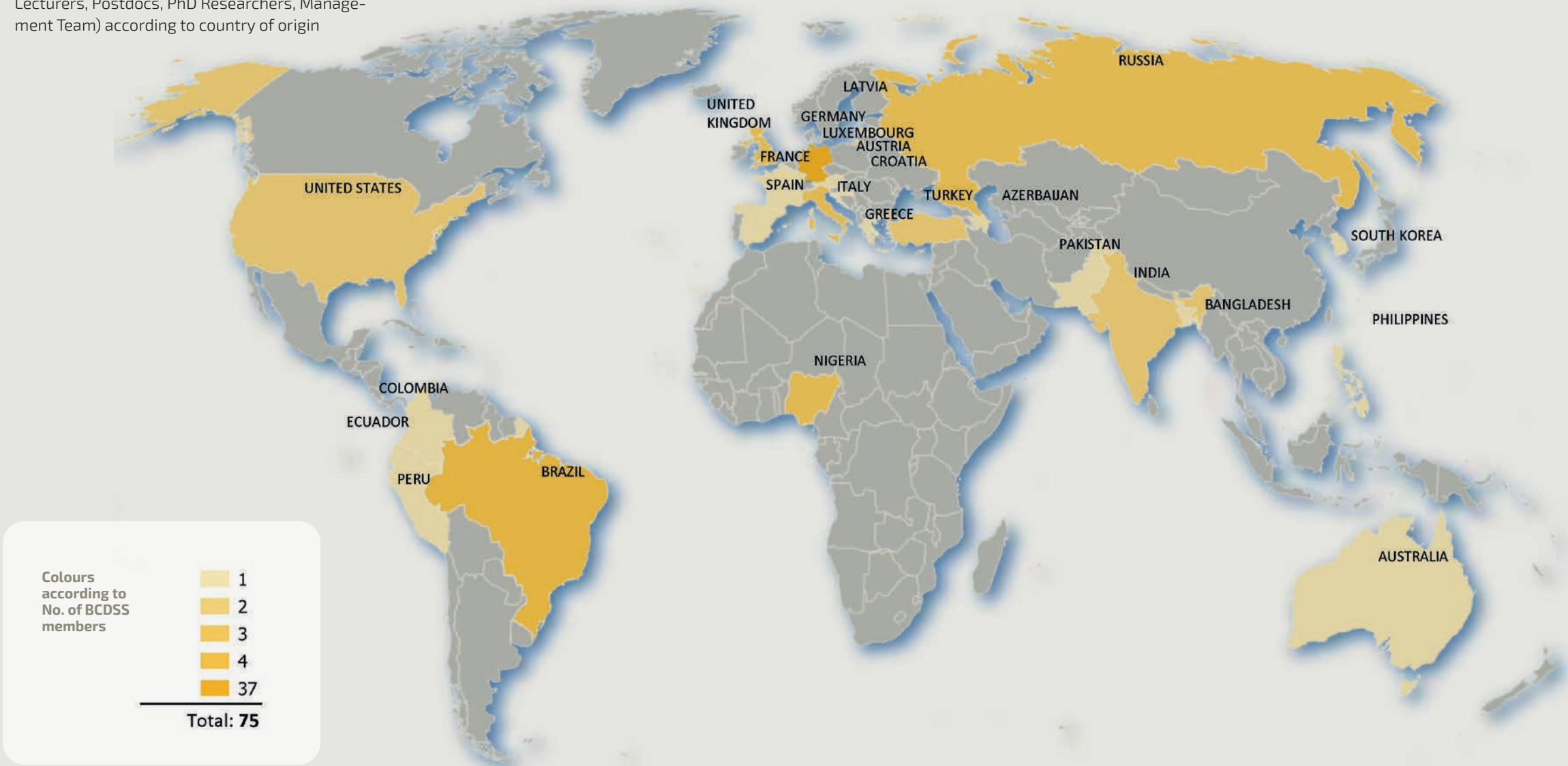


Illustration by:



Dr. Till F. Sonnemann
is research associate at the Bonn Center for Digital Humanities (BCDH), focusing on projects that include non-invasive geophysics, remote sensing methods and GIS topics. With a background in geophysics and a PhD in archaeology, his interest lies in large-scale understanding of urban landscapes and historic water management.

FIELD RESEARCHERS' REPORTS



As they investigate **strong asymmetrical dependency**, our scholars go beyond the study of written records. They travel to the regions they research in order to scrutinize historical sources and artefacts. They also conduct interviews with experts and communicate with local people. In the following pages, the scholars share impressions from their historical, archaeological or anthropological field research.



The Western Cape Archives and Records Service in Cape Town, South Africa, collects the documents of the Dutch Colonial Period (1662-1795). ©Eva Lehner

ONE MONTH OF RESEARCH IN CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2022

by Eva Marie Lehner

To develop my postdoctoral research project on Slavery and Dependency in Cape Town during the Dutch Colonial Period (1652-1795), I had the chance to spend one month in Cape Town. Although my main goal was to do archival research, I also explored the city and its historical sights. And I met South African historians and genealogists working on the slavery past of their city.

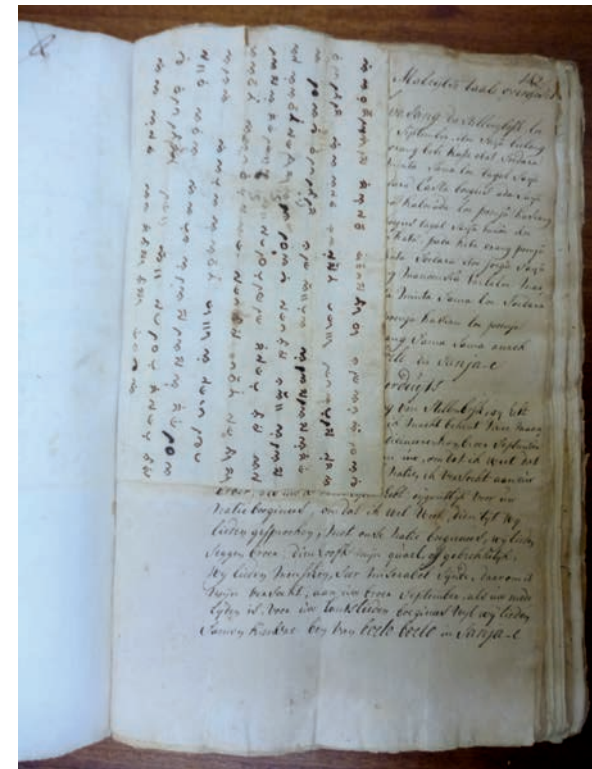
The Western Cape Archives and Records Service in Cape Town, South Africa, collects the documents of the Dutch Colonial Period (1662-1795).

The Western Cape Archives and Records Service collects, manages, and preserves records that form part of South African archival heritage. It maintains archival records dating back to 1651 when the first colonial settlement by the Dutch was established. I was overwhelmed by the numerous written sources and the extreme violence documented during the Dutch colonial period that is preserved and can be consulted in the Archive. Cape Town stands out among early modern colonies because it features a strongly multicultural setting and a type of settler colonialism impacted by high mobility and inherent norms and practices of violence. The population in

early modern Cape Town included the Indigenous Khoi and San people, settlers and travelers from Europe, and enslaved people from Southeast Africa, India, and Indonesia, that were forcefully shipped there. The archival material I collected during my research trip will help me to re-evaluate processes and practices of enslavement, racialization, and sexualization in early modern Cape Town.



Criminal records from the Dutch colonial period (RAAD VAN JUSTITIE) are archived in the Western Cape Archives and Records Service and provide insight into enslaved people's lives in Cape Town during the 17th/18th centuries.



Letter written by Upas van Bugis in August 1760 and archived by the Dutch colonial office. The Western Cape Archives and Records Service, Council of Justice 373, part 2, pp. 142-143.

One highlight for me was finding a letter written by an enslaved man in Buginese that I had read about in the literature. This letter was written in 1760 by Upas van Bugis. Upas came from the Indonesian island of

Sulawesi and worked as an unfree laborer in Stellenbosch. After falling ill for over two months, he wrote a short note to September van Bogis. September was also from Sulawesi but worked in a Cape Town household as an unfree servant and was known for his medical expertise. The letter was written in their native languages, and September kept it in a chest in his accommodation. Neither expected this letter to become a fatal doom for the recipient. When September was accused by the colonial court in Cape Town of being at the head of an uprising, the letter found in his chest was presented as evidenced by the colonial court and was kept as such in the criminal records. My archival research will allow me to investigate different cultural practices of resisting slavery and oppression.



In the Archive reading room with Prof. Nigel Penn (University of the Western Cape) and Karl Bergemann (University of Stellenbosch) in September 2022.

Although archival research can be a lonely adventure, the Archive in Cape Town is a busy place and a great place to connect and work. It is situated in the city center, easily accessible with lovely coffee places and book shops around. Staff members were all very supportive in advising and guiding me through the processes. The archive is consulted by locals, genealogists, and international researchers. I had the pleasure to meet Professor Nigel Penn from the University of Cape Town, who had worked and published extensively on Dutch colonial history and the history of Slavery in South Africa. I talked to Associate Professor Laura Mitchel from UC Irvine about her archival findings on slavery and resistance and Dr. Kate Ekama from the University of Stellenbosch, who works on slavery in the Indian Ocean worlds.

But the most inspiring and exciting thing about the archive in Cape Town is that one meets not only historians there but also genealogists and people

researching their family's history. Aubry Springveldt is frequently coming to the archive. He is a teacher and a tour guide and has studied his family's history for decades: "All my life, I've had a passion for genealogy. I started on my family tree in 1987, and after years of pioneering research, I discovered my slave ancestry. This started me on a lifelong pursuit of the history of slavery at the Cape."

The history of slavery in Cape Town is not only preserved by its archival heritage. The historical buildings, monuments, museums, and landscapes that can still be visited today bear witness to this rich and diverse history. It is visible and can be experienced by walking throughout the city. To do this, Aubry Springveldt developed a self-guided audio tour guide ("VoiceMap"). It allows anyone to trace the slavery-related history and heritage throughout the city of Cape Town.



Company Gardens were founded by the VOC (the Dutch East India Company) to produce food for the sailors and settlers in Cape Town. Work was carried out mainly by unfree workers imported from Southeast Africa, India, and Indonesia.

The Company Gardens, for example, was a workplace for enslaved people and a place to share knowledge about plants, their medical use, and nutrition.



The exhibitions in the Isiko Slave Lodge Museum in Cape Town show the living condition of enslaved men, women, and children. The vitrine shows a baby bonnet knitted by an enslaved woman, a tobacco box, and a bangle that belonged to an enslaved person.

The Isiko Slave Lodge Museum document enslaved people's living and working conditions, using artifacts and material culture to exhibit them. The exhibition "Under Cover of Darkness: Women in Servitude in the Cape Colony" raises the question of enslaved women's invisibility in the written sources.

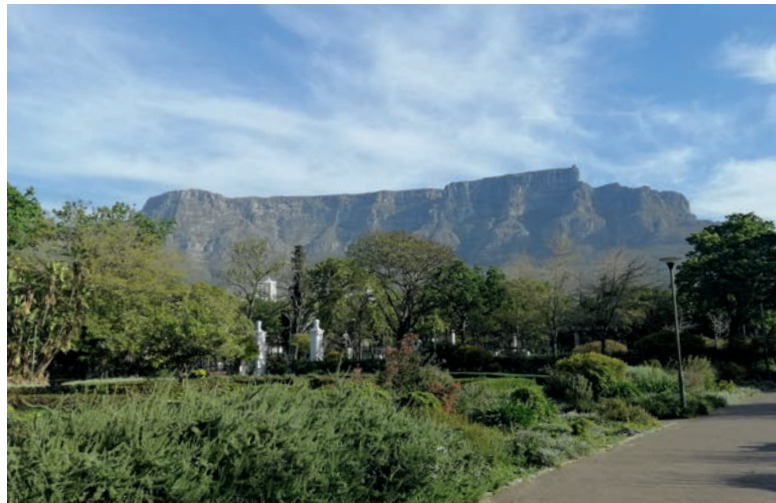


Table Mountain has been Cape Town's famous mark since the Seventeenth Century. Enslaved people and deserters used it as a hiding place.

The famous Table Mountain that shapes the panorama of Cape Town till today was a hiding place for runaway slaves and deserters and therefore was discredited by colonists.

All these places, heritage sites, and rich material sources add some bits and pieces to create a fuller picture of the history of slavery and other forms of strong asymmetrical dependencies in the early modern period that came with colonialism.



Dr. Eva Marie Lehner

is a historian and a postdoctoral research associate at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies at the University of Bonn. Her research interests cover early modern history, gender and body history, and the history of slavery and dependency.

In her current research project, she investigates dependencies and resistance during the Dutch colonial period (1662-1795) in Cape Town, South Africa.



VISITING RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP AT THE BENIBA CENTRE FOR SLAVERY STUDIES

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2022

by Jennifer Leetsch

Last autumn, I was fortunate enough to visit the University of Glasgow's Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies on a short-term research fellowship. After years of pandemic stasis, it was invigorating to travel and meet colleagues in person, beyond Zoom rooms and digital platforms. The members of the Beniba Centre welcomed me with generosity, grace and open arms, and they gave me the opportunity to dive head-first into the university's research community and to experience the city's vibrant cultural scene.

In one-on-one meetings and larger colloquia, I was able to share my research and learn from rigorous intellectual exchange. I presented work from my second book project on early Black Atlantic literature: fusing perspectives from autobiography studies and the environmental humanities, I read late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century forms of black life, writing from an ecocritical perspective. During my fellowship in Glasgow, I worked on the slave narrative of Mary Prince. *The History of Mary Prince* was published in 1831, only a couple of years before the official abolition of slavery in the British colonies, and it was the first narrative published by a black woman in Britain.



I was able to develop my thinking about the geographies and ecologies of the Caribbean, in particular the salt flats on the Turks and Caicos Islands which Mary Prince harvested for many years. The Turks and Caicos Islands are a set of islands and cays located about 900 miles south-east of Bermuda and at the southernmost tip of the Bahamas. Cynthia M. Kennedy explains in her article "The Other White Gold: Salt, Slaves, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and British Colonialism" that "[t]hese salt islands were all low sandy formations with low average annual rainfall where warmth, sun, and incessant trade winds predominated" (2007, 218). Such geological conditions "aided the quick, natural evaporation of seawater that overflowed into shallow lagoons and brackish inland ponds" (219). The islands were harvested and variously claimed by French, Spanish and British profiteers beginning in the sixteenth century. This white gold, even more precious than sugar or molasses, was then transported and traded north to America and across the globe.

Upon arriving on the Turks and Caicos Islands after a four-week sea voyage, Prince's work on the island comprised of standing in shallow pools of salt water to rake the salt crystals that remained on the edges of the lagoons once the water had evaporated in the blinding sun. Not only did the sun reflect on the crystalline surfaces and damage the workers' eyes irreparably, the salt water they had to move in for whole days on end also caused blisters and boils on exposed skin. Day and night, Prince and her fellow enslaved people were wholly enveloped by the salt. They were also ordered to drink salt water as punishment and cruel medicine. In short, the salt took over their lives. If we also consider this from an ecological and eco-critical perspective, Prince's work on the salt plantation and her in-depth descriptions of the dehumanisation enforced by the enslavers reveal the inextricable link between the colonial environment and the histories of capitalism, colonialism and racism. As Clyde Woods wrote pointedly, colonial expansion and conquest enthroned a "worldview [which] saw the ecosystem in all its biodiversity as isolable and exploitable parts: forests became timber, deer became fur, water became irrigation, and people became slaves" (1998: 43). Mary Prince and the other enslaved people she worked with in the horrors of the plantation's salt landscapes were embroiled in an insidious cycle of resource extraction, human life/death and capital.



The members of the centre helped me shape my thinking on and around these colonial ecologies, and I am grateful for their engagement with my work. Meeting with historians who focus on the Atlantic slave trade as well as with cultural and literary scholars who work on environmental humanities topics provided exactly the right kind of interdisciplinary mix that was needed for a project like mine. I can say that my work profited enormously from being embedded in the lively research community around the Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies and from the excellent archives, library collections and online resources provided by the university.

Another highlight was getting to meet the visiting researcher Dr Sonjah Stanley Niaah from the University of the West Indies during her trip to Glasgow and learning from her work. In addition, I was able to enjoy many of the exciting events in and outside the university, especially within the context of Black History Month. At the Glasgow Film Theatre, I saw the UK premiere of *Lagareh: The Last Born*, a film by Barbadian-Scottish artist Alberta Whittle that explored the topics of racism and slavery. The screening was followed by a conversation between the artist and Dr Peggy Brunache, a lecturer on the history of Atlantic slavery at the University of Glasgow and the Director of the Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies. Multiple visits were made to curator Zandra Yeaman's intervention at The Hunterian, titled

Curating Discomfort, which explored the museum collections with academics, educators, community activists and social justice campaigners. This intervention was exemplary for shining a light on perspectives from outside of traditional museum contexts in order to take museums such as The Hunterian, the oldest museum in Scotland, out of their institutional comfort zones, and for addressing the links between empire, transatlantic slavery, colonialism and migration that continue to structure our world today.

I commenced my stay at the University of Glasgow by immersing myself in the outdoor exhibition of South African visual artist Zanele Muholi's work *Somnyama Ngonyama*, which translates from isiZulu to "Hail, the Dark Lioness". Presented as a series of self-portraits displayed in the university's East Quad, the images played with conventions of fashion photography and traditional painting as well as with tropes of ethnographic imagery in order to reconfigure questions about identity, race and embodiment. Muholi's subjects took in their surroundings with a defiant black gaze, eclipsing the University of Glasgow's stately stone archways and green gardens, thus creating new ecological and aesthetic relations.

My visiting research fellowship allowed me space and time to really focus on my research in a generative and productive environment, and to share my thoughts with interested and helpful colleagues; it also gave me the chance to create what I hope will be lasting links between Bonn and Glasgow.

Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies, Glasgow

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/az/slavery/>



Dr. Jennifer Leetsch

is postdoctoral scholar at the BCDSS where she researches and teaches on slavery's global entanglements in the Black Atlantic world and beyond. She is currently working on a second book project which intertwines forms and media of black life writing with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ecologies.



Grounds of the Barbados Department of Archives. ©Joseph Biggerstaff

RESEARCHING THE HISTORY OF SLAVERY AND DEPENDENCY IN THE WORLD'S NEWEST REPUBLIC

JANUARY TO MARCH 2023

by Joseph Biggerstaff

RESEARCH TRIP TO BARBADOS

Earlier this year I visited Barbados to carry out research for my dissertation project. I had been fascinated with the history of Barbados, a small island in the eastern Caribbean, since reading *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (1986) by Sidney Mintz. In this classic study, anthropologist Sidney Mintz describes how Barbados quickly developed into the first modern sugar colony in world history. Despite its small size, Barbados played a major role in the history of slavery in the Atlantic world and remained a player on the global stage ever since. Only two years ago, in November 2021, Barbados became the world's newest republic after officially removing Queen Elizabeth II as head of state. Coming to the



Barbados Department of Archives. ©J.B.

island right after this intense historical moment felt surreal. In many unexpected ways, this visit would reshape my perspective as a researcher.

For about three months my research alternated between the Barbados Department of Archives and the Shilstone Memorial Library at the Barbados Museum and Historical Society. The Department of Archives is housed in an abandoned leper asylum (the Lazaretto) which operated until 1994. The Barbados Museum is located in an old British military prison. The fact that so much history is held in former carceral sites is fitting considering its colonial past. Despite this similarity, these are quite different research environments. The Department of Archives is a bustling place with many different users--from international researchers to first-timers seeking genealogical information. The Shilstone, on the other hand, is a compact library where one works closely with the head librarian, Ms. Harriet Pierce.



Courtyard of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society. ©J.B.



Barbados Museum Historical Society, view from inside the courtyard and of the building where the Shilstone Library is located. ©J.B.

Ms. Pierce was proactive, to say the least. Without a word, she would retrieve a folder I hadn't requested or even knew existed, set it down in front of me, and then return to her desk. This was a refreshing change from the transactive experience one typically experiences in most archives. At the Department of Archives, too, I was incredibly fortunate to have the assistance of a

knowledgeable staff, but Harriet went the extra mile. She offered rides and shared local knowledge of the island's history. One day I stumbled upon an unfamiliar reference in a manuscript. Without hesitation, she pulled the volume so that we could check it. The item turned out to be a multi-volume transcription of early long-lost records of Barbados made. To her surprise, no other historian had noticed the odd reference or consulted the item in her long tenure as head-librarian. Though it was in extremely poor condition, she supervised me as I checked the reference--with shaking hands. I learned of an enslaved woman fighting for custody of her children before the Council of Barbados in the mid-seventeenth century. Historians know about similar cases in Virginia, but this is the first recorded incident of this in the Anglophone Caribbean. Thanks to my due diligence, the digitization of this collection has now been prioritized and will hopefully be one of Ms. Pierce's many final projects before her retirement next year. Once accessible, it will greatly expand knowledge of the early modern Atlantic world. It was an absolute goldmine for my dissertation research.

Another day, the museum received a call from the office of the prime minister, Mia Mottley. Once a year the prime minister delivers an annual address to the Bajans (the local word for a native or inhabitant of Barbados) on matters of finance and policy. Just hours before the speech, her office was calling to inquire about the date of settlement of Speightstown, a port city on the island's northwest coast. To her surprise, Ms. Pierce could not recall the date. Determined to find an answer, she jumped onto the tall wheeled ladder and slipped from one end of the tiny library to the other, snatching books from the highest shelf. To her surprise, there was no record anywhere of the date in question! Nonetheless, as both head librarian and a native of Speightstown, she was able to give an overview of the history of Speightstown, which we soon after heard repeated--with deft authority--by the prime minister in her speech. We laughed out loud. It was heartwarming to see how swiftly the museum offered its expertise to the well-beloved Mia Mottley, but my laughter turned to alarm as she announced a plan to digitize the early records at the national archives. The project was set to begin within three months and would be completed in three years, hopefully. Stressing the importance of the project, she proclaimed that "those records go back to 1639 and tell a story that we have hardly started to scratch and uncover."

I could not have said it better myself. Unfortunately, however, I realized almost immediately after arriving that it would be difficult to complete my research on this trip. Working with these materials is arduous

and time-consuming. There is a lot of labor involved in cross-referencing deeds, wills, and other records in order to trace the enslaved people at the center of property exchanges within and between slave-owning families. I had been already plotting my return and was at a complete loss hearing this news. I had also not fully recognized the political implications of my research aim to trace the ownership of plantations through multiple generations and identify biographical fragments of enslaved people within the genealogical archive. I wondered whether the digitization project was connected to recent efforts to claim reparations from individual families who have benefited from the slave economy in the British Caribbean. In any case, losing access to these records prematurely will force me to pivot my research questions. A full reckoning of ownership may no longer be viable, but it still is possible to extrapolate from the case studies I've developed already. And it might be useful to stretch the temporal scope of the project into a *longue durée* thereby implementing records from a later period, which are more plentiful.



A gully in St Andrews Parish, with members of the Barbados Hiking Association. ©J.B.

Time spent in the archives is not all that is involved in the daily life of a researcher, and a highlight of this trip was joining the Barbados Hiking Association every Sunday morning. It was not always easy waking up at 5 am, but these hikes were an invaluable experience. Not only did I get to know some local Bajans and listen to their stories of the local landscape, but I was able to visit hard-to-find former plantation sites. The hardest

stretch of these hikes was always through the gullies. A gully is a ravine that formed when the island began to rise from the ocean nearly one million years ago. Systems of gullies provided natural barriers between plantations and formed a subaltern highway for enslaved people to travel out of the watchful eye of the overseer. While bushwhacking through a particularly difficult gully in St. Andrew parish, known as the "Scotland district" for its rough topography, I reflected again on how little historians will ever be able to really know about the history of slavery from below. I had come to Barbados to visit the archives, however, my knowledge and understanding of the island's people and their history grew immensely through the communal practice of hiking. This was another important turning point in my experience and perspective as a researcher. It certainly won't be the last.



Joseph Biggerstaff

is PhD researcher at the BCDSS, studying the global Atlantic world. His dissertation looks at the mutation of the plantation complex in Barbados by extra-economic means, specifically inheritance.

By centering enslaved people, this work creates plausible genealogies in a *longue durée* history of ownership and dispossession. At the BCDSS, he co-teaches an annual excursion seminar on German global history, organizes a running workshop on Marxism and dependency, and participates in several working groups.



fig. 1: Aerial photo of the escarpment of the western periphery of Tzikin Tzakan, with visible modern private plots as natural fences covering vast areas of the archaeological settlements. ©Alejandro Garay.

REVISITING THE UNSEEN

MAY 2022

by Paul Graf

FIELDWORK IN GUATEMALA

It is hard to imagine how, after only three years of research, the illusion of a rural landscape, now covered with cow pastures, dirt roads, and shrubs (fig. 1), has been transformed into the illusion of a cultural landscape that was cultivated, inhabited, and transformed by long-gone humans. In the *DEPENDENT* issue 22/1, I wrote that the distribution of food sources implied asymmetrical dependencies in the access to essential resources, especially due to the presence of intensified agricultural systems in strategic locations that were bounded by walls. The extent of this landscape modification has only begun to reveal itself in the last few months, thanks to the technical-digital methods involving drones and ground-scanning instruments that were used in my main field campaign in the summer of 2021, the data of which has been processed by now. Nine months after my main fieldwork, I got the opportunity to return to the Mopan River Basin and continue my research in Tzikin Tzakan. This final fieldwork for my PhD project served to answer open questions that had emerged from the data collected before. These questions concerned, first, a particular pattern in upland settlements in the form of stone slabs with cavities underneath, which were identified as possible

graves through the use of shovel pits; second, a barely visible elongated anomaly in the drone models for Cerro Subín that resembled a rampart; and third, the ancient neighborhood of Pueblito 2, whose history was largely unknown.

To start with the first concern, two of the putative burial contexts, each on the modified mountains of Cerro Subín and Puerta del Cielo, were excavated in the form of larger test pits. The result was, in short: they were not graves. However, the true meaning is no less interesting. Everything indicates that the limestones formed a leveling on which the inhabitants of the residential areas walked, worked, and interacted daily around 1300 years ago. And the cavities below were not burial chambers but the result of a very loose and pure sand layer poured directly over the bedrock. In the case of Cerro Subín, it was found that an elongated trench was cut into this natural limestone formation, suggesting that this system served for drainage and possibly for the filtration of rain water. Although a catch basin has not yet been found, the new findings from the drone models suggest that the apparently "empty" southern shoulder of the Cerro Subín mountain contained terraces that may have been irrigated in this way. Another detail that could be confirmed through the recent test pits in Puerta del Cielo is an enormous trash pit that contained, almost exclusively, the production remains of a lithic workshop, which was probably located in the group of buildings directly west of it. An "extra" that emerged in Puerta del Cielo, both from the new excavations and from the analysis of the drone models, is a water reservoir (fig. 2) that was connected by a canal to an open area with a terrace and which probably served for agricultural irrigation.



fig. 2: Excavating an aguada at Puerta del Cielo. ©Paul Graf.

The second question involves a series of embankments and ramparts that cover the central sections of the western periphery. The aerial photographs and elevation models from the drone data showed that these extend primarily within and west of the section of Cerro Subín 1, where they delineate an area that contains the highest concentration of possible terraces. The

most prominent rampart separates Cerro Subín 1 from Cerro Subín 2 and consists of a massive mixture of chert and limestone cobbles. However, before the May 2022 season, a parallel anomaly representing another particularly long wall was detected further south. Both this anomaly and the terraced and regularly spaced embankments between the ramparts were investigated during this field season through small excavations, which proved that they corresponded to the same construction method. This suggests a high labor input, and thus, the control of labor.

Further south of Cerro Subín 1, at the base of the mountain range, is Pueblito 2 – the site referred to by the third question and the focus of the fieldwork. Here, we conducted a series of intensive test excavations, through which we came to know

that this neighborhood existed contemporaneously with Cerro Subín 1.

A comparison of artifact assemblages, monumentality, and access to agricultural resources suggests that Pueblito 2 was most likely in an asymmetrical relationship with Cerro Subín 1.



fig. 3: Cleaning the petroglyph of Pueblito 2 under the observation of an interested visitor. ©Elian Lima Albeño.

Nonetheless, as in Pueblito 1 (see DEPENDENT issue 22/1), an advantage can be seen in its proximity to the river basin. We were taught a memorable lesson about the importance of the Salsipuedes Stream on a joint fishing trip with excavation workers. Among the findings from the river fauna was not only local and introduced fish, and a turtle. There was another resident of the river bank that, as we later learned, used to share the same spot with us and made us change our mind about our after-work ritual: a crocodile.

But back to the real work: another important find is another petroglyph that we completely excavated (fig. 3), consisting in notch lines in the shape of an inverted N. Thus, a total of four rock art sites were discovered since the 2021 season, all of which in relatively prominent locations (they will be published in the near future). The existence of the petroglyph in Pueblito 2 suggests that the nearby group, where polychrome pottery and sherds of a possible censer were also recovered, had a ritual meaning.

Apart from these activities, the seasonal state of the landscape allowed for the mapping of a previously little-known neighborhood, Pirámide Francisco 3, located south of the monumental four-story pyramid on the modified mountain of Cerro Maax. According to the new findings, the complex, located east of Cerro Subín, did not only have a significance as an important ceremonial precinct, but also included, in addition to several residential groups, a hydrological system for the accumulation of water in a large rectangular basin or *aguada*. The mountain was surrounded by isolated groups classified as *miradores*, which monitored and regulated the access to this section. This fact reinforces the general hypothesis that,

even more than food resources, moral resources in the form of public, theatrical, and communal rituals represented embodied dependencies that moved people to integrate and perform labor services and tax levies.

I would like to conclude by coming back to the contemporary problems of asymmetrical dependency and changing landscapes. Of course, the modification of the landscape did result in the abandonment of settlements a thousand years ago. After a long period of dominance by the forest, it has begun to see – at least since the middle of the 20th century, when the community of La Pólvara was founded – new forms of land use.

Social, political, and environmental conflicts, as well as encouragement from governmental agencies, brought these settlers to this place, but they are in constant competition for their land with the authorities, the military, and multinational corporations.

The consequences of climate change and the difficult access to water are further factors that challenge these people on a daily basis.

I believe that as archaeologists and anthropologists, who interfere with the daily lives in these communities, we should also look beyond the aim to restore the history of a landscape shaped by humans. We should work with these communities and support them in their fight against contemporary asymmetries.



Paul Graf

is PhD researcher at the BCDSS and research associate in Research Area B "Embodied Dependencies". He is interested in environmental archaeology and pre-Columbian dependencies based on essential resources in societies located in tropical environments in the Americas, especially the southern Maya lowlands in Mesoamerica. His doctoral thesis considers certain essential resources as bodies of dependency which can influence settlement patterns, the social system and the political economy.

NEWS

WHO IS WHO AT THE BCDSS MANAGEMENT TEAM

www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/people/management



NEW AT THE CLUSTER

New Fellows



Dr. Matthew Dziennik
United States Naval Academy
06/23 – 07/23
Soldiers, Slavery, and Dependence in West Africa, c. 1750–1850



Prof. Dr. Carolina González Undurraga
University of Chile
03/23 – 08/23
Domestic Work and Manumission by *Coartación*. Enslaved and Freed Women in Chile, 1770–1823



Prof. Dr. Christian Laes
University of Manchester, UK
02/23 – 09/23
Children at Work in the Late Ancient and Early Mediaeval Period (ca. 400 – ca. 1000). A Comparative Approach for the Latin West and the Byzantine East



Dr. Katja Makhotina
University of Bonn
04/23 – 09/23
Monastic Prisons in Russia in the Early Modern Times



Dr. Özden Mercan
Hacettepe University
Ankara, Turkey
01/23 – 09/23
Premodern Mediterranean Forms of Unfree Labour and its Spatial Dimensions. Case Study on the Tuscan Port Livorno



Dr. Justin Roberts
Dalhousie University,
Halifax, Canada
05/23 – 08/23
Chattel: Slavery in the Early English Tropics, 1640–1713



Dr. Thiago Sapede
Federal University of Bahia, Brazil
06/23 – 07/23
The Muleke ("Church Slaves") in the 18th and 19th Centuries Kingdom of Kongo



Dr. Hillary Taylor
University of Cambridge, UK
02/23 – 06/23
Violence at Work in Early Modern Britain and its Overseas Territories



Dr. Rafaël Thiébaud
Institut des Études Politiques, Reims, France
01/23 – 05/23
Unfree Labour in the Southwest Indian Ocean (17th–19th Centuries)



Dr. Claudia Varella
University of La Rioja, Spain
04/23 and 07/23 – 08/23
Meanings from Below (Slave Hiring and Manumission by Purchase in Cuba)

Guests



Sara Eriksson
University of California, Berkeley, USA
01/23 – 09/23
The Average Person – Looking for Enslaved Labor at Hellenistic Kalaureia



Fabiano Glaeser Dos Santos
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil
06/23 – 10/23
The Catholic Church and the Abolitionist Movement: Reception of Abolitionist Papal Documents and their Reception in Theological Discourse



Dr. Marina Torres Trimállez
KU Leuven, Belgium
06/23 – 07/23
Trafficking of Girls and Catholic Missionary Networks in The South China Sea (18th–19th Centuries): A Transnational Approach – UNSILENCE



Prof. Dr. Chioma Daisy Onyige
University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria
06/23
Gender and crime; environmental sociology; gender and climate change; cognate issues, including conflict and peace building

New PhD Researchers



Samuel Huckleberry
06/23
The Sacral Realm: Religion, Rulership, and Slavery in Premodern Islam



Mauro Armando Adelino Manhanguela
02/23
Language, Power and Mutual Dependencies: Interpreters and the Administration of Justice in Colonial Mozambique, 1895–1974



Karolyne Mendes Mendonça Moreira
10/22
Incarnated Spirits: Sorcery, Mutual Dependencies and Normative Production in Southern Mozambique (1890–1940)

New Investigators



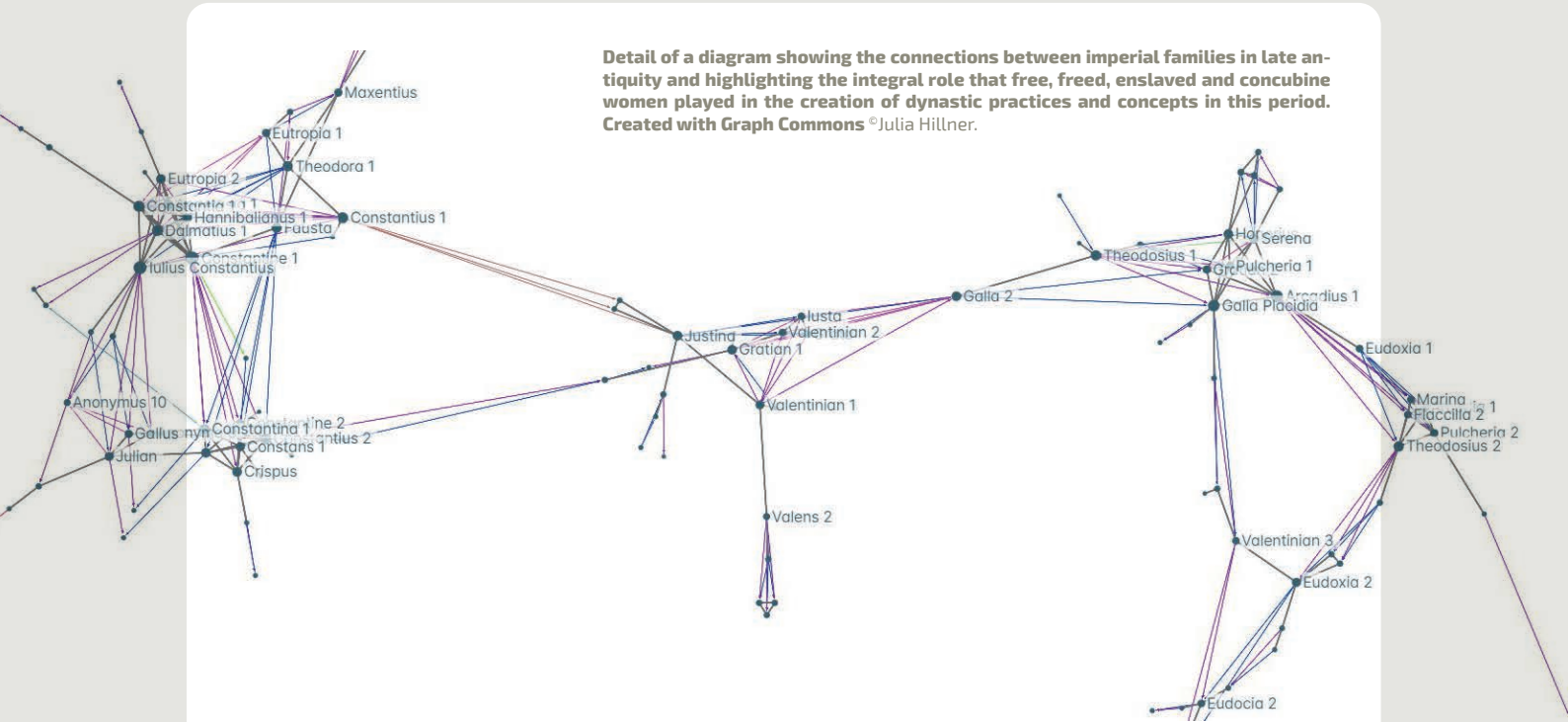
Prof. Dr. Paul Basu
Hertz-Professor of Global Heritage within TRA 5: Present Pasts, and Director of Global Heritage Lab at the University of Bonn
Taking the heritage of Western knowledge production – as materialized in scientific museums and university collections – as a starting point, he investigates the legacies of colonialism through decolonial theories and methodologies in order to inform the making of more just and sustainable futures.



Prof. Dr. Alice Toso
Junior Professor for Bioarchaeology at the University of Bonn
Her research examines the movement of intercontinental migrants and pathogens between Europe and South America in the early globalized world via the analysis of diet, nutrition, health and mobility, using archaeological, historical and biomolecular techniques.



Prof. Dr. Stefan Feuser
Heisenberg-Professor of Archaeology at the University of Bonn
His research on the urbanism of maritime settlements in the Greek and Roman Mediterranean contributes to Research Area B: "Embodied Dependencies". In his work, he analyzes ecological dependencies between maritime environments as well as dependencies between ports, harbors and anchorages.



CONNECTING LATE ANTIQUITIES (CLA)

Connecting Late Antiquities is a research project funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) through a UK-German collaborative grant of c. £700,000 (c. €800,000). It involves the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, the University of Exeter, and the University of London.

The project uses new digital methods to transform our understanding of social relationships at the end of the ancient world. Late antiquity, spanning roughly the third to seventh centuries AD, was a time of dramatic change. Contributing factors include the growth of Christianity and its ecclesiastical organisation and the replacement of the political structure of the Roman empire with a number of independent successor kingdoms. The vitally important field of prosopographical scholarship has traditionally focused on the privileged few who constituted the social and political elite. It paid little attention to the rest of society. These people, although not as well represented in the surviving sources, have nonetheless left behind evidence of their lives, particularly in inscriptions and papyri. Previous projects that sought to catalogue late-antique people omitted these individuals. Furthermore, they separated the 'secular' sphere of government from the 'religious' sphere of the Church, thereby exacerbating a notion of them

as distinct realms whose contacts sometimes led to tension and conflict. Such an approach therefore runs the risk of imposing modern distinctions on a much more fluid and interconnected world.

The project builds on recent scholarship that challenges these categorisations. Simultaneously, it demonstrates the potential of linked data to enrich the understanding of past societies both in academic circles and more widely. Project members will begin by digitising and updating the monumental three-volume Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire (PLRE; focused on members of the imperial government and currently only available in print). They will make this and its underlying data publicly available via the Cambridge University Press website.

Their other major digital output will be a central CLA electronic resource. This will be constructed according to up-to-date standards for linked data, which will combine the PLRE data with new entries drawn from prosopographies of the Church and surviving evidence for inhabitants of late-antique Britain. This will allow them to complete two case studies of specific western regions of the later Roman empire: the first, on North Africa, explores the movement of local elites into the clergy and the roles played in their careers by social networks and relationships with their communities; the second, on late-antique Britain, moves beyond the highest echelons of society to explore interactions with sub-elites and the degree of mobility they enjoyed.

This new CLA resource will also become a framework for linking to other information about late-antique people contained in a variety of online repositories, including biographical dictionaries, databases of statues, inscriptions and papyri, and museum catalogues. This central hub will make it much easier for users to access the wealth of material that is currently fragmented across a great number of disparate sites, thereby breathing new life into completed digital projects and providing a stable base for new ones. While this work will be ongoing after the

end of the funded period, project members will be prioritising the linking of projects which are directly relevant to our case studies, including the databases of Migrations of Faith: Clerical Exile in Late Antiquity (clericalexile.org), led by BCDSS professor Julia Hillner, and the Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England (pase.ac.uk), as well as a number of online museum catalogues. The aim is to demonstrate the utility and added value of this approach.

The project runs from 2023 to 2025.

WHO WORKS ON THE CONNECTING LATE ANTIQUITIES PROJECT?

BCDSS Team



Prof. Dr. Julia Hillner
Principal Investigator
Julia Hillner took up the position of Professor of Dependency and Slavery Studies (Imperial Rome, Late Antiquity) in October 2021 and is Research Area E Representative "Gender and Intersectionality". Prior to that she was a Heinz Heinen Fellow at the BCDSS. She works predominantly on the transformations of the family and the household in the period 300–750 and how these are reflected in legal norms and practices. She has published widely on related topics: from the urban context of the family and property holding, particularly in the city of Rome, to issues of authority, dependency, hierarchy and discipline within the household and how these have influenced concepts and practices of state punishment. Most recently, she has researched structures of dependency within the late Roman imperial household, especially during the reign of the first Christian emperor Constantine. In 2022, Hillner published a biography of Helena, mother of the emperor Constantine for the *Women in Antiquity* series. The book examines Helena in the context of a network of female contacts and the social parameters of late antique women. Hillner writes a blog dedicated to the subject of Helena and her life called *Writing Helena*.



Dr. Jessica van 't Westeinde
Researcher
Jessica van 't Westeinde describes herself as a researcher would be historian of religion-turned-ancient historian, or thereabouts. After obtaining her PhD from the University of Durham, van 't Westeinde has spent time working at a number of universities in Denmark, Switzerland, and Germany; in departments of Cultural Studies, Theology, Jewish Studies, and Ancient History. Here in Bonn, she is working on the AHRC-DFG-funded project 'Connecting Late Antiquities' (PIs Julia Hillner and Richard Flower). Besides her responsibility for the digitization of PLRE volumes IIIA and IIIB, she will conduct prosopographical research on Roman and 'post-Roman' Britain, with a focus on social networks between elites (including clergy) and non-elites. These new finds will feed into the new CLA resource, and the results will be published as journal articles. Although this is a full-time job, she is sure she will still find time to spend with Jerome of Stridon (currently, she is writing an article on the presence of slaves and servant girls in his writings).



Dr. Jeroen Wijnendaele
Researcher
Jeroen Wijnendaele is senior fellow of the BCDSS, working on Prof. Julia Hillner's 'Connecting Late Antiquities' project. He helps with revising and digitizing vol. 2 of *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* (AD 395–527), whilst doing research on secular and religious networks in Late Antique North Africa. Before coming to Bonn, Dr. Wijnendaele worked and taught at various universities in Australia, Belgium, Ireland, and Italy. His own work focusses on Late Roman political and military violence, the genesis of barbarian communities in Late Antiquity, and the modern reception of 'the Fall of Rome', on which he has published extensively. He is the author of the first Dutch study on the end of the western Roman empire (*Romeinen en barbaren*, Davidsfonds Leuven 2013), and wrote a micro-history of the Late Roman warlord Bonifatius (*The Last of the Romans*, Bloomsbury Academic 2015). As editor, he coordinated the *Journal of Late Antiquity*'s 2019 theme-issue on 'Warfare and Food-supply', and has just completed a volume on Late Roman Italy. *Imperium to Regnum* (Edinburgh University Press, 2023). For Oxford University Press, he will write a new book on *Rome's Disintegration. War, Violence, and the End of Empire in the West*.

UK Team Members

Dr. Gabriel Bodard
University of London
Co-Investigator

Dr. Richard Flower
University of Exeter
Principal Investigator

Dr. Aleksander Paradziński
University of Exeter
Researcher

Dr. Charlotte Tupman
University of Exeter
Co-Investigator

Film Screenings and Discussions

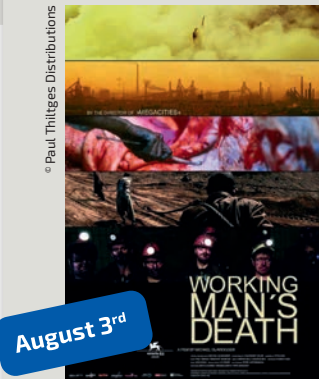


We are carrying on with our film and discussion series "Who's got the Power?", jointly organized by the BCDSS and Förderverein Filmkultur Bonn. From August, we will be putting on three more screenings and discussions for the year, one of which – *Tori et Lokita* (2022) by the Dardenne brothers – is run in cooperation with the Uni Bonn Media Studies Department.

The aim is to make the concept of strong asymmetrical dependency tangible for a wider audience through the screening and discussion of films that depict a variety of scenarios of human oppression. The audience is invited to discuss impressions and thoughts with members of the cluster, and where possible, with filmmakers. Cluster members and anybody else interested in the themes are welcome to get in touch, whether to register for one of the screenings, contribute to the discussions, or both.

Unless otherwise stated, the screenings and discussions take place on Thursday evenings:

- **Venue:** Kino in der Brotfabrik, Kreuzstraße 16, 53225 Bonn
- **Film Screening - Discussion - Drinks Reception**
- **For more information & registration contact:** Cécile Jeblawei pr@dependency.uni-bonn.de



August 3rd

"Workingman's Death" (2005)
by Michael Glawogger

The documentary addresses contemporary precarious labor across the globe, focusing on heavy manual labor in Ukraine (illegal coal mining in Donbass), Indonesia (mining sulphur from a volcano crater), Nigeria (working at the open-air slaughterhouse), Pakistan (dismantling an abandoned oil tanker for scrap metal), and China (extreme working conditions in the steel industry).

- Discussion in English
- Cluster input by Ayesha Hussain (PhD researcher), more input welcome!
- Cinema ticket fees apply
- Invitation to post-screening drinks reception

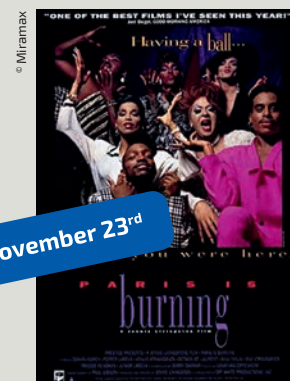


September 28th

"Tori und Lokita" (2022)
by Dardenne Brothers

The movie depicts multiple forms of strong asymmetrical dependencies connected to migration from Africa to Europe. Two young refugees from Benin form a makeshift safety net for one another in the absence of blood relatives while they are facing marginalization, coerced labor, child labor, sexual exploitation, criminalization and further forms of oppression in Belgium.

- Cooperation with Uni Bonn Media Studies Department
- Discussion in German
- Cluster input by BCDSS Professor Claudia Jarzebowski, further input by Lucas Curstädt, Media Studies Department
- Free entrance to screening and discussion
- Invitation to post-screening drinks reception



November 23rd

"Paris is burning" (1990)
by Jennie Livingston

Documenting the queer "Ballroom Culture" in New York City in the 1980s, the movie explores Latino and African-American gay and transgender communities who struggle with multiple discrimination regarding their race, class, gender, sexual identity.

- Discussion in English
- Thematic focus on the cluster's Research Area E: Gender (and Intersectionality)
- Discussion led by BCDSS Professors Julia Hillner and Pia Wiegmann
- Cinema ticket fees apply
- Invitation to post-screening drinks reception

NEW BCDSS BLOG LAUNCHED IN MAY 2023



What is life like as a scholar or student at the BCDSS? What are the big and small research questions, and what the everyday perks and pitfalls? Find out from our new BCDSS Blog!

To complement the center's periodical publications, including our *DEPENDENT* magazine, the BCDSS Blog provides a new channel where readers can encounter the numerous people and the complex processes that operate behind the scenes to produce knowledge about asymmetrical dependency and slavery at the BCDSS.

Our forty-five PhD researchers write a regular column posted on the first Monday of each month. Blog posts may cover various topics, including the development and application of theory, interdisciplinary research ethics, fieldwork reports, case studies based on archival findings, highlights from interviews with noted scholars and practitioners, pedagogical vignettes, engagement on questions of diversity and inclusion in the academic world, and much more.

The three articles posted so far are each unique in character and content. The kick-off post by PhD representatives David B. Smith, Lena Muders, and Ayesha Hussain on "PhD Research, Interdisciplinary Collaboration, and Sparks", invited us to delve into the manifold stories that come with every research endeavor. It was followed by Mary Afolabi's "The World of Colonial Letters", a blog composed as a

letter and addressed to her blog readers. In July's contribution, Bahar Bayraktaroğlu shared her very personal experiences and critical thoughts on "Documents, their Absence and Power: An Immersive Experience at the National Archives in London".



Other groups, including students from our MA programs, post-docs, research group leaders, administrators, and professors, are also encouraged to write regularly or on special occasions.



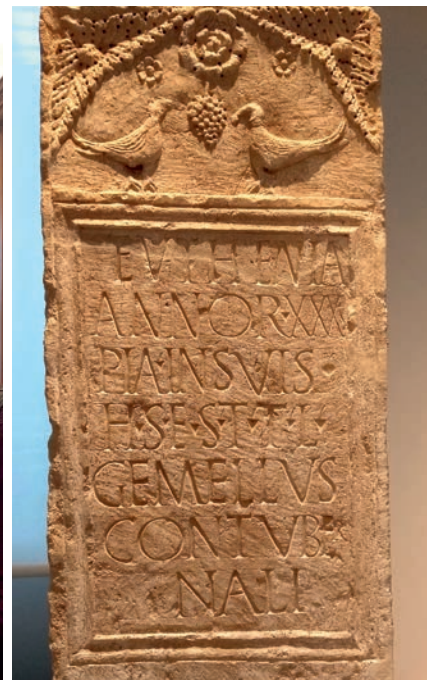
CHECK OUT THE BCDSS BLOG.
EACH POST INCLUDES AN AUDIO VERSION:
dependency.blog

The BCDSS Blog aims to be a creative space where cluster members can engage with their topics in a relatively informal style. The articles published here have been reviewed by members of an editorial team at the BCDSS, but the thoughts and opinions expressed by the individual students and researchers are their own. They do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the BCDSS.

The editorial team (Laura Hartmann, David B. Smith, Ayesha Hussain, and Bugra N. Duman) is happy to hear from you if you have any queries or suggestions. Contact: l.hartmann@dependency.uni-bonn.de



The Library of Ancient Slavery (LAS) during the opening event



Euthenia Stone, image by Julia Hillner, courtesy of Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn



During the opening event with em. Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Herrmann-Otto (University of Trier)



Sample documents from the opening event

EUTHENIA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

We are thrilled that since the opening of the Library of Ancient Slavery (LAS) at the BCDSS last year, there has been growing interest in the collections of our new library. To give international early-career scholars access to the vibrant and interdisciplinary research environment, we set up the 'Euthenia Fellowship Program, named after a woman called 'Euthenia', who lived in Roman Bonn.

THE LIBRARY OF ANCIENT SLAVERY

In 2021, the BCDSS was handed over the Library of Ancient Slavery of the former Mainz Academy project "Forschungen zur antiken Sklaverei" ('Research on Ancient Slavery') as a loan. It was a sizable collection which had accumulated some 16,600 media units over the course of three decades by 2012. In addition to classic books or monographs (3,500), there are also numerous printouts or photocopies of encyclopaedia entries, papers and articles (12,250), as well as some microfilms and a large stock of PDF files (3,100). It is one of the world's largest collections on ancient slavery, including texts not only in the European scholarly languages, but also from the Slavic, Nordic and Finno-Ugric language families, as well as titles in Hebrew, Turkish, Japanese, Korean and Chinese. Since the arrival of these large collections, the BCDSS has taken care of registering the bibliographical data onto a library catalogue, a process that was completed at the beginning of this year. The library is now ready to be explored by scholars, students, and aficionados from near and far.

THE NEW FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The new scheme ensures that once every academic year, one doctoral or postdoctoral researcher will be awarded a six-month fellowship in order to benefit from working at the library and advance their research on slavery and dependency. The fellowship is awarded in the summer preceding the start of the academic year for visits between October and September.

WHY EUTHENIA?

In 1958, a Roman gravestone was unearthed in Bonn which marked the tomb of Euthenia, an enslaved woman. According to her epitaph, Euthenia died when she was 35 years old, probably in the second half of the first century CE, soon after the construction of the first legionary fortress in Roman Bonna. Euthenia was among the first inhabitants of the civilian settlements that sprang up near the military area, the vicus and the canabae legionis.

EUTHENIA FELLOWSHIP IN A NUTSHELL

The next deadline for applications: **31 July 2023**

Eligible are:

- doctoral candidates
- postdoctoral researchers (including non-tenured postdocs and tenure track assistant/associate professors).

The Fellowship Comprises:

- a monthly stipend of € 1,550 for doctoral fellows,
- a monthly stipend of € 2,400 for (non-tenured) postdocs (up to four years after their doctorate),
- a monthly stipend of € 3,000 for senior postdocs (more than four years after their doctorate, including tenure track assistant/associate professors),
- travel allowance (outward and return journey),
- basic accommodation,
- a working space including a desktop computer at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies,
- support in organizational matters upon arrival,
- support in finding day care for children.



READ MORE ABOUT THE LIVES OF EUTHENIA AND GEMELLUS



FIND OUT HOW TO APPLY



READING AND DISCUSSION WITH MAREICE KAISER

HOW MUCH? WHAT WE DO WITH MONEY AND WHAT MONEY DOES TO US.



PLEASE
REGISTER FOR
THIS EVENT VIA
THE VHS ▶



Money is a topic that often triggers feelings of shame and is talked about too little. For her book *How much? What we do with money and what money does to us*, Mareice Kaiser had many conversations about money and gives an insight into the money stories and feelings of people who have either very little or very much money.

The journalist and mother, who financed the writing of her book in part through unemployment benefits, describes her relationship with money as toxic: "I'm ashamed of not having any money. I'm ashamed of having money."

What is the significance of money for educational opportunities, and how does one's degree affect one's income? Does the German education system cement the distribution of wealth? What influence do origin and gender have?

Join Mareice Kaiser for her reading and discussion with BCDSS Principal Investigator Karoline Noack and Jean-Pierre Schneider, Director of Caritas Bonn, about the dependency relationships behind the unjust distribution of money and how this could be overcome.

The event is a cooperation between the BCDSS and the Adult Education Center (VHS) Bonn.

Event held in German.

TIME / PLACE / REGISTRATION:

October 30, 2023
from 18:15 – 19:45
followed by a reception
Adult Education Center (VHS) Bonn
Mühlheimer Platz 1
Room 1.11 (Saal)
53111 Bonn



Mareice Kaiser

born in 1981, works as a journalist in Berlin. She writes essays, columns, books and tweets on the topics of inclusion, education, family and politics.

BCDSS PARTICIPATION AT UNI BONN SUMMER OUTREACH ACTIVITIES:

WISSENSCHAFTSRALLYE AND WISSENSCHAFTS- FESTIVAL 2023

CHILD LABOR – BETWEEN EXPLOITATION AND EMANCIPATION

At the time of industrialization in Europe, child labor was a permanent feature of the working world. Children worked both in factories and in agriculture or at home, often under severe physical and psychological conditions. The dangers to which they were exposed, however, also led to the first consideration of rights for children. The motivation behind this was not always compassion, but also the concern that the family would not be fed and that sick children would not become good soldiers.



One of the activities: weaving under time pressure

The concept for these outreach events was developed with the expertise of BCDSS Professor Claudia Jarzebowski and student assistant / trainee teacher Tobias Happ. At both events, participants had the opportunity to learn about the background and history of child labor in the 19th century by moving through a 'gallery walk' with pictures and short

info texts. Cluster members, from professor to (post) doctoral researchers and members of the PR team, discussed questions such as "Where did children



Claudia Jarzebowski with Wissenschaftsrallye participants May 2023



The BCDSS Child Labor Stall at the Wissenschaftsrallye

work?" and "Under what conditions did they have to work?" with them. To give the (young) participants a brief impression of what child labor could mean for the children involved and what role child labor plays in the history of childhood, they were offered to take part in short activities involving sewing on buttons and weaving against the clock, or carrying heavy sacks of potatoes. The feedback we received suggests that visiting our stall had changed the participants' perspective on child labor (history) and increased their awareness and curiosity.

The Wissenschaftsrallye and Wissenschaftsfestival are annual outreach events organized by Bonn University in cooperation with Uni Bonn Institutes, Clusters, and/or Transdisciplinary Research Areas. Both aim at young audiences: Wissenschaftsrallye at children aged 13-17 and Wissenschaftsfestival at a more open range, including the whole family.



MORE ABOUT THE
WISSENSCHAFTSRALLYE
NEXT EVENT: SATURDAY 27 APRIL 2024



MORE ABOUT THE
WISSENSCHAFTSFESTIVAL
NEXT EVENT IN JULY 2024



Linen was the largest German export by value throughout the 17th and 18th centuries.ⁱ Linen was the primary German good produced explicitly for the slave trade. During this time, labor costs in Central Europe lagged behind those in Western Europe, rendering Germany “a low-wage region, which oriented its production toward high-price Western markets.”ⁱⁱ German merchants took advantage of this position by maintaining the depressed wages of the former peasant class, who they paid on a piece-work system. These merchants made German linen a staple of the slave economy by ensuring it was sold for less than the competition. The

less money the slave owner spent on clothing, feeding, and housing slaves, the greater the plantation’s net profits would be. The slave economy was an essential market for the products of underpaid wage labor in Germany, and elsewhere in Europe.

“Osnaburgs” or “osnabrigs,” were made in Osnabrück. According to a 1744 report on the British linen trade, all the black people in the West Indies were “generally clothed with German linens, from 6d to 9d an Ell, called Osnaburghs.”ⁱⁱⁱ Another report indicated that all 70,000 enslaved people in Barbados were “usually clothed with Foreign ‘Osnaburghs.’”^{iv}

This practice translated into law in instances when the slave codes prohibited enslaved people from wearing anything other than “negro cloth.” The 1735 South Carolina slave codes dictated that:

Be it enacted by the authority aforesaid. That no owner or proprietor of any negro slave or other slave whatsoever, (except livery men or boys,) shall permit or suffer such negro or other slave to have or wear any sort of apparel whatsoever, finer, other, or of greater value, than negro cloth, duffelds, coarse kearsies, osnabrigs, blue linnen, checked linnen or coarse garlix or calicoes, checked cottons or

scotch plaids, not exceeding ten shillings per yard for the said checked cottons, scotch plaids, garlix or calico, under the pain of forfeiting all and every such apparel and garment.^v

Black fugitives were tracked by their appearance. Fugitive slave ads circulated descriptions of black people who had run from bondage. These descriptions allowed any white person who read them to function as a deputy of the slave patrol and a sentry of the plantation. Osnaburgs were an identifier of enslavement. As such, they were one of the most common descriptors of fugitives from slavery.

ⁱ Klaus Weber, “Germany and the Early Modern Atlantic World: Economic Involvement and Historiography,” in *Beyond Exceptionalism: Traces of Slavery and the Slave Trade in Early Modern Germany, 1650–1850*, ed. Rebekka von Mallinckrodt, Josef Köstlbauer, and Sarah Lentz (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), 46.
ⁱⁱ Klaus Weber, “Deutschland, der atlantische Sklavenhandel und die Plantagenwirtschaft der Neuen Welt,” *Journal of Modern European History* 7, no. 1 (March 2009): 57–58; Klaus Weber, “Linen, Silver, Slaves, and Coffee: A Spatial Approach to Central Europe’s Entanglements with the Atlantic Economy,” *Culture & History Digital Journal* 4, no. 2 (Dec. 2015): 11.
ⁱⁱⁱ Weber, “Germany and the Early Modern Atlantic World,” 32.
^{iv} Weber, “Linen, Silver, Slaves, and Coffee,” 8.
^v “An Act for the Better Ordering and Governing of Negroes and Other Slaves, 1735,” in *The Statutes at Large of South Carolina: Containing the Acts Relating to Charleston, Courts, Slaves, and Rivers*, ed. David J. McCord (Columbia: A. S. Johnston, 1840), 396.

TRANSATLANTIC SLAVERY, REPARATIONS, AND A MODERN ART MUSEUM:

A REVIEW OF CAMERON ROWLAND’S EXHIBITION “AMT 45 I” IN FRANKFURT AM MAIN

by Pia Wiegink

Cameron Rowland is a preeminent contemporary artist whose works often and repeatedly engage with histories and legacies of the transatlantic slave trade, Caribbean and American slavery, and practices of prison labor and convict leasing that emerged in the United States after the abolition of slavery in 1865. In previous solo exhibitions such as “3 & 4 Will IV. c. 73” at the Institute for Contemporary Arts in London (2020), “D37” at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, (2018), or “91020000” at the Artists Space, New York (2016), Rowland exhibited ready-made objects that were not merely material remnants of the histories of slavery and coerced black labor prac-

tices but also pieces that reflected on the much more intricate and complex pervasion of these histories in our present economic, cultural, and social fabrics.

A recipient of the prestigious MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship at age 30 in 2019, Rowland is a conceptual and also an “academic” artist: The objects that Rowland exhibits are often accompanied by an essay the artist wrote. The essays do not just accompany the exhibitions but rather serve as a lens, an intellectual gateway to the objects on display and are an inextricable part of the exhibitions, providing important context and comment.

With “Amt 45 i,” which is exhibited at the Tower^{MMK} (one of three venues of the art museum Museum für Moderne Kunst) in Germany’s financial capital, Frankfurt, Rowland has now turned to German entanglements and involvements in transatlantic slavery. The essay Rowland wrote for “Amt 45i” draws attention to the multifaceted ways in which the territories that later became Germany participated in and profited from the transatlantic trade in human beings and the economic system of slavery: “Germany exemplifies the ways in which slavery and colonization were coordinated across Europe. In absence of a nation-state or a unified colonial state, German merchants, patrician families, corporations, and prince-electors (politicians) exacted the violence of slavery and colonial domination for their own wealth accumulation.”¹

It is the systematic organization of “wealth accumulation” that the visitor is immediately confronted with when entering the exhibition: The object “Omission, 2023” is a corporate history chart by the Commerzbank which was originally designed by

the Historisches Museum Frankfurt (a museum of the history of Frankfurt); it is an apt example of the cleansing of history since the chart, as we learn from Cameron’s commentary on this object in the essay, omits the fact that 7 of the 12 merchants who founded the Commerzbank made their money with the trade in goods produced by enslaved people in the Americas. Furthermore, Commerz Real AG, which belongs to the Commerzbank corporation, co-owns the TaunusTurm; the Commerzbank headquarters are located just around the corner. As part of a municipal requirement that the corporate building must also provide public use, the TowerMMK, which opened in 2014, was granted free use of the exhibition space for 15 years. It is thus no coincidence that Rowland entitled the exhibition “Amt 45 i.” “The slavery that Europe instituted,” Cameron explains, “is part of Europe. The value extracted from enslaved life has been retained, recirculated, and grown. This value is sustained within European states, institutions, corporations, and families. Museum MMK für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt city government department Amt 45 i, is one such institution.”²

The next object the visitor encounters is a large German loom (fig. 1), which was used for producing linen in the eighteenth century. As scholars like Klaus Weber and others pointed out, German linen cloth was a major export product manufactured for the Americas, used to clothe enslaved people in so-called “true born Osnaburghs” – distinct clothing that was durable and identified its wearer as an enslaved person.

Whereas these objects demonstrate the extent to which German financiers, merchants as well as



“Bugs in the wheat” was code among the enslaved. It meant that slave patrollers had discovered their secret meeting. Enslaved people protected these meetings by tying a rope across the path. The rope tripped the patrol horse and threw the patroller.

Cameron Rowland, *Bankrott, 2023, Indefinite debt*

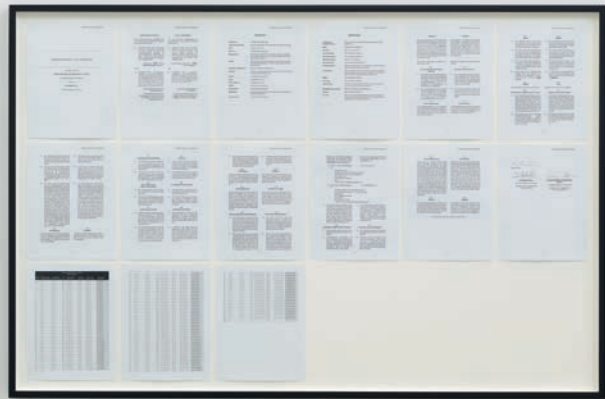


fig. 3

Reparations were paid to slave owners. Compensated emancipation allowed slave owners to retain the value they had assigned to the lives of slaves in addition to the profits they had extracted from slaves' labor. Compensated emancipation in Haiti, Brazil, Cuba, Washington D.C., the British colonies, the Danish colonies, the Dutch colonies, and German East Africa paid slave owners for their loss of enslaved property.

Slave owners and their financiers were provided monetary compensation, high-interest debt obligations, and indentured servitude as repayment.

British compensation payments fueled the growth of British financial institutions that held outstanding plantation mortgages including Barclays, Lloyds Bank, and the Royal Bank of Scotland. The Haitian compensation debt, originally

paid by formerly enslaved people to French slave owners, has been bought and sold by numerous banks including Crédit Industriel et Commercial, Crédit du Nord, Citibank, and ODDO BHF. These compensation payments continue to grow within European banks alongside the profits of the slave economy. The value of slave life, labor, and reproductive capacity remains integral to European financial institutions,

corporations, universities, museums, and governments. Frankfurt am Main is the monetary center of the eurozone and houses offices of nearly every major European financial firm. The concentration of financial firms in Frankfurt am Main has enriched the city since the 17th century.

A loan of 20,000 euros was issued to the Museum MMK für Moderne Kunst from Bankrott Inc., a company created for the purpose of holding an indefinite debt. Because it is a demand loan, no payments can be made until the lender demands repayment. Bankrott Inc. will never demand repayment. The debt will accrue interest indefinitely. It will increase at a rate of 18 percent each year, the highest rate legally allowable. The Museum MMK für Moderne Kunst is a city government department, Amt 45 i. For this reason this debt is owed by the city of Frankfurt am Main.

As reparation, this debt is a restriction on the continued accumulation derived from slavery. As a negation of value, it does not seek to redistribute the wealth derived from slave life but seeks to burden its inheritors.

poor wage laborers participated in the transatlantic slave system, thus focusing on the perspective of white European profiteers of slavery, other objects hint at the multifaceted means that enslaved people employed to resist slavery. "Bug trap, 2023" (fig. 2), for example, consists of a rope that curtails the visitor's movement through the exhibition space. Ropes, we learn again from Rowland's contextual notes in the essay, were used to protect the secret meetings of enslaved people from discovery by the slave patrols on horses, who would trip over these ropes. To secretly warn against the patrols, enslaved people referred to them as "bugs in the wheat."³

The most intriguing object is entitled "Bankrott, 2023. Indefinite debt" (fig. 3). It is a 10-page lean contract between the MMK, represented by its director Susanne Pfeiffer as borrower, and Bankrott, Inc., represented by Cameron Rowland as lender. According to this document, Rowland lent the museum EUR 20,000 at an annual interest rate of 18%. In the glass cabinet that displays the contract, visitors can also see a three-page debt projection which illustrates that after a 100-year debt period, the museum would owe Bankrott, Inc. more than EUR 311 billion.

After the end of transatlantic slavery, enslaved people never received reparations for the forced labor, the humiliation, the violence, and the trauma they endured over multiple generations. Instead, enslavers – as it was the case in the abolition of slavery in the British Caribbean in 1834 or in the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution – often received generous compensation for their loss of property. In this sense, Rowland's exhibition not only draws attention to the continuing entanglements of German money, people, economies, and institutions with the histories of Atlantic slavery, it also offers a sharp – and biting – artistic intervention into current debates regarding reparation, restitution, reconciliation, and justice.



Prof. Dr. Pia Wiegink is Professor of Dependency and Slavery Studies at the BCDSS. In her current research, she examines cultural practices of remembering slavery and its legacies in the US and Germany; she is also interested in the so-called afterlives of American slavery in Oceania. She wrote extensively on American antislavery literature and continues to work on narratives of (American) slavery and dependency and their transatlantic entanglements and circulation.



Screening of „Der Vermessene Mensch“ at the NRW-Premiere at Cinenova Köln on 15 March 2022. ©Mercy Mashingaidze

„DER VERMESSENE MENSCH“ – FILM REVIEW

by Mercy Mashingaidze

On March 23, 2023, the movie „Der Vermessene Mensch“ was launched across German cinemas. Director Lars Kraume addressed a topic that has, until now, not been able to enter the German “Erinnerungskultur”: the genocide of the Nama and Herero during German colonial rule in what is now Namibia. Did he succeed?

“Jeder Student bekommt ein eigenes Exemplar zur Erforschung.”

This statement is made by Professor von Waldstätten (Peter Simonischeck) to his ethnology students in the film “Der Vermessene Mensch” (2023). It comes as a follow-up practical task to a lecture that he had given earlier, in which he compared the size of a white man's skull (bigger) to that of an African San man (smaller). The difference in skull size was at that time postulated as being a determining factor of intelligence and superiority. The quest to provide more evidence to support this racial superiority claim continues in the scene where von Waldstätten assigns one Herero person to each of his students as “Exemplar zur Erforschung” (specimen for research). The Herero initially travelled to Berlin to meet and present their grievances to Kaiser Friedrich Wilhelm, only to find themselves as research subjects.

The film's main actor, Alexander Hoffmann (Leonard Scheicher), is one of the ethnology students assigned to study the Herero. Studying the Herero meant measuring the size of their heads, ears and noses to prove

this racist colonial theory. Hoffmann embodies the complex nature of scientific research. Through him, the film's scriptwriter and director Lars Kraume successfully highlights both the good and the dark sides of scientific research. The complicit role of (pseudo) science in reifying discriminatory colonial practices is also evident throughout the film.

HOFFMANN AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PRACTICES

In line with my positionality and experience as an African critical scholar, a research methodology lecturer and a former archivist interested in decolonizing research, I have decided to focus this review on Hoffmann's problematic research practices and the lessons therein. Doing so facilitates critical reflections beyond the film – it draws attention to the way research is designed, to how data is collected, analyzed and presented. It also brings to the fore the importance of adhering to research ethics, of critically reflecting on research methods, of exercising researcher reflexivity, of critically engaging with historical sources, and of provenance research when it comes to museum collections.

Hoffmann studies the Herero delegation's translator Kezia Kunouje Kambazembi (Girley Charlene Jazama), who he develops an interest in and is determined to learn more about. He later visits Kunouje and her colleagues (still in Berlin) with a list of pre-set research questions to understand more about their culture. Kunouje explicitly tells him that they will play a game and discuss (*"Wir spielen und reden, ein Gespräch, kein Studium"*). Unlike the previous scene where the Herero were measured and treated like objects, this scene allows them to exercise their agency by engaging in conversation and determining the terms under which this would be done. The fact that they are able to share their lifestyle and beliefs with Hoffmann enables them to break what Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie calls "the danger of a single story" (Adichie, 2009). The single story in this context being the one of inferiority that pseudoscience created on the basis of the sizes of their skulls. Adichie states that "It is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power {...} Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person" – which is exactly what von Waldstätten does in his lectures.

Hoffmann manages to gain significant insights into the lives of the Herero, and the analysis of these insights leads him to the conclusion that there is no superior race – that the perceived difference is influenced by external circumstances rather than genetic disposition. This conclusion is contrary to the pseu-

doscience theories used to justify, institutionalize and maintain colonial asymmetrical power relations and racist policies of that time. It is therefore rejected by von Waldstätten and his colleagues who are preoccupied with maintaining the status quo. The rejection of Hoffmann's argument and evidence that no race is superior than any other can be thought of in terms of what Michel-Rolph Trouillot referred to as moments where historical silences are created – the silencing in this Hoffmann case is created at the moment of fact creation or the making of sources (Trouillot, 1995, 2015). It, however, later emerges towards the end of the film that Hoffmann's findings were not totally "silenced", he was simply unaware that they had been published (I will return to this point towards the end of this review).



A few years after the rejection of his findings, Hoffmann volunteers to be part of the team that travels to German South West Africa colony (Namibia) to collect skulls for further research in Berlin. There, he witnesses the 1904–1908 genocide, during which German soldiers blatantly shoot and kill thousands of Herero and Nama people and force survivors into concentration camps. These scenes were emotionally triggering and difficult for me to watch because of the vivid visualization of the atrocities. What was, however, even more disturbing was seeing Hoffmann cutting off human heads from the bodies of murdered Herero and Nama people and vandalizing graves to collect old human skulls (all in the name of research!). He also broke into abandoned homes and stole cultural goods to send to Berlin for research

purposes. His conduct exemplifies the controversial unethical research performed during colonial times, which has over the years been criminalized.

The film serves as a reminder to constantly reflect on and adhere to guiding ethical principles in order avoid overstepping boundaries like Hoffmann did. Ethical principles include ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, minimizing risk to harm, anonymity and confidentiality – all of which the Herero and Nama were denied, particularly in the scene where they were measured by von Waldstätten's students. On data collection methods and analysis, the film serves as an example of why calls to decolonize research methodology should be urgently and more concretely addressed. The need to decolonize research cannot be overemphasized, particularly given such problematic histories as the one portrayed in *"Der Vermessene Mensch"*. Through the different methods Hoffmann uses – measuring Herero heads for von Waldstätten's class, playing a game while having a conversation with the Herero delegation, as well as stealing human skulls and cultural goods – the problematic nature of research approaches that fail to consider "other ways of knowing" is highlighted. This is seen in how a simple conversation in an informal setting yielded much more information for Hoffman than the so-called rational ways of knowing, like measuring human skulls.

Researcher reflexivity is another important exercise that Hoffmann fails to do. Towards the end of the film, he runs away when he sees Kunouje cleaning-up a human skull at the concentration camp; he can no longer bear looking at himself in the mirror; and he tears his published article, giving the excuse that he was young when he claimed that there was no superior race. All these "cowardly" actions could not undo the harm he had caused in the name of research, something that researchers can draw lessons from and remember while striving to make reflexivity a continuous practice.

Hoffmann's uneasiness in the final scenes can be interpreted in different ways. The director did a good job here in leaving these scenes open to the audience's own interpretations. For me, the fact that he ran away and could not look at himself in the mirror shows his shock and disappointment at the realization that he had become too preoccupied with collecting skulls and cultural goods and finding Kunouje, to the extent that he failed to see the moral, physical and psychological damage that the genocide had caused to everyone, including himself. I read the tearing of the article and the statement "I was young"

as a realization that the colonial system was bigger than individuals, and that it had strong gatekeepers (like his Professor). It can thus be seen as the final symbolic action of giving in to the system and the discourses it created on a superior race. It is about the larger politics of knowledge creation, and about Hoffmann realising that he could not do much in the larger scheme of things, except to concede, conform and get the teaching position that he had long desired at the university. I say this because he could have opted out of the system after realising that he could not change anything – that would have been an act of resistance – but he chose to succumb and erase the contradictory claims he had made earlier by tearing the article.

Although the film is emotionally triggering and difficult to watch because of the graphic visualization of a horrid past that many a people feel uncomfortable in confronting, it is an important contribution to German-Namibian colonial history. Given that this part of history is not taught German schools, the film *"Der Vermessene Mensch"* provides a good starting point for discussions, which have indeed already been underway since the film premiered in March. The conscious effort to stimulate discussions is evidenced by the different information and educational materials provided on the official film website as well as the post-premiere expert panel discussions in various cities, for example, the one that I attended in Cologne on March 15, 2023.

That being said, I must point out that the film also has a number of issues that can be critiqued in terms of the representation of the various acts of genocide, as well as its implications on how the genocide is remembered in both Namibian and German societies. However, these issues require an in-depth discussion and remain outside the scope of this review. I therefore leave these discussions to experts on Namibian history, German colonialism, genocide and memory studies, filmmakers, film reviewers and activist scholars.



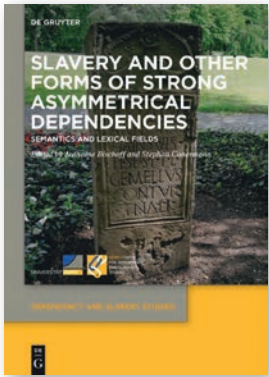
Dr. Mercy Mashingaidze

is a postdoctoral researcher and lecturer at the BCDSS, holding a PhD in Development Studies from the University of Bonn. She teaches research methods, modern slavery, as well as legacies of slavery and colonialism. Her research interests include migration and structural inequalities.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

EMBODIED DEPENDENCIES AND FREEDOMS: ARTISTIC COMMUNITIES AND PATRONAGE IN ASIA

Volume 5 in the BCDSS series "Dependency and Slavery Studies" (DSS)
by Julia A.B. Hegewald



Julia A.B. Hegewald,
Embodied Dependencies and Freedoms: Artistic Communities and Patronage in Asia
(Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2023)
ISBN: 9783110979855

Have you ever thought about dependencies in Asian art and architecture? Most people would probably assume that the arts are free and that creativity and ingenuity function outside of such reliances. However, the 13 chapters provided by specialists in the fields of Asian art and architecture in this volume show, that those active in the visual arts and the built environment operate in an area of strict relations of often extreme dependences. Material artefacts and edifices are dependent on the climate in which they have been created, on the availability of resources for their production, on social and religious traditions, which may be oral or written down and on donors, patrons and the art market. Furthermore, gender and labour dependencies play a role in the creation of the arts as well. Despite these strong and in most instances asymmetrical dependencies, artists have at all times found freedoms in expressing their own imagination, vision and originality.

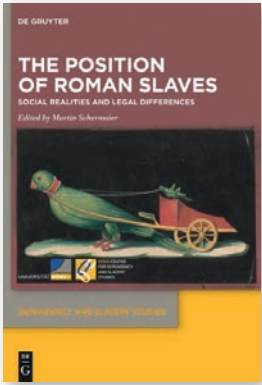
This shows that dependencies and freedoms are not necessarily strictly separated binary opposites but that, at least in the area of the history of art and architecture in Asia, the two are interconnected in what are often complex and multifaceted layers.



Download via open access:

THE POSITION OF ROMAN SLAVES: SOCIAL REALITIES AND LEGAL DIFFERENCES

Volume 6 in the BCDSS series "Dependency and Slavery Studies" (DSS)
by Martin Schermaier



Martin Schermaier,
The Position of Roman Slaves: Social Realities and Legal Differences
(Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter 2023)
ISBN: 9783110998689

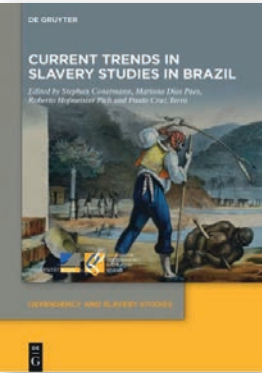
Slaves were property of their *dominus*, objects rather than persons, without rights: These are some components of our basic knowledge about Roman slavery. But Roman slavery was more diverse than we might assume from the standard wording about servile legal status. Numerous inscriptions as well as literary and legal sources reveal clear differences in the social structure of Roman slavery. There were numerous groups and professions who shared the status of being unfree while inhabiting very different worlds. The papers in this volume pose the question of whether and how legal texts reflected such social differences within the Roman servile community. Did the legal system reinscribe social differences, and if so, in what shape? Were exceptions created only in individual cases, or did the legal system generate privileges for particular groups of slaves? Did it reinforce and even promote social differentiation? All papers probe neuralgic points that are apt to challenge the homogeneous image of Roman slave law. They show that this law was a good deal more colourful than historical research has so far assumed. The authors' primary concern is to make this legal diversity accessible to historical scholarship.



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CURRENT TRENDS IN SLAVERY STUDIES IN BRAZIL

Volume 7 in the BCDSS series "Dependency and Slavery Studies" (DSS)
by Stephan Conermann, Mariana Dias Paes, Roberto Hofmeister Pich and Paulo Cruz Terra



Stephan Conermann, Mariana Dias Paes, Roberto Hofmeister Pich and Paulo Cruz Terra, eds.,
Current Trends in Slavery Studies in Brazil
(Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2023)
ISBN: 9783111026527

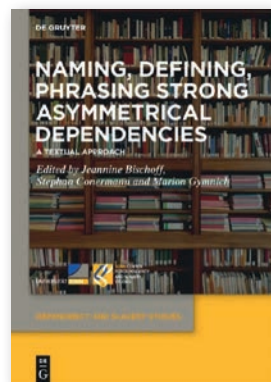
African slaves were brought into Brazil as early as 1530, with abolition in 1888. During those three centuries, Brazil received 4,000,000 Africans, over four times as many as any other American destination. Comparatively speaking, Brazil received 40% of the total number of Africans brought to the Americas, while the US received approximately 10%. Due to this huge influx of Africans, today Brazil's African-descended population is larger than the population of most African countries. Therefore, it is no surprise that Slavery Studies are one of the most consolidated fields in Brazilian historiography. In the last decades, a number of discussions have flourished on issues such as slave agency, slavery and law, slavery and capitalism, slave families, demography of slavery, transatlantic slave trade, abolition etc. In addition to these more consolidated fields, current research has focused on illegal enslavement, global perspectives on slavery and the slave trade, slavery and gender, the engagement of different social groups in the abolitionist movement or Atlantic connections. Taking into consideration these new trends of Brazilian slavery studies, this volume of collected articles gives leading scholars the chance to present their research to a broader academic community. Thus, the interested reader get to know in more detail these current trends in Brazilian historiography on slavery.



Download via open access:

NAMING, DEFINING, PHRASING STRONG ASYMMETRICAL DEPENDENCIES: A TEXTUAL APPROACH

Volume 8 in the BCDSS series "Dependency and Slavery Studies" (DSS)
by Jeannine Bischoff, Stephan Conermann and Marion Gymnich



Jeannine Bischoff, Stephan Conermann and Marion Gymnich, eds., *Naming, Defining, Phrasing Strong Asymmetrical Dependencies: A Textual Approach* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter 2023) ISBN: 9783111210544

An examination of the terms used in specific historical contexts to refer to those people in a society who can be categorized as being in a position of 'strong asymmetrical dependency' (including slavery) provides insights into the social categories and distinctions that informed asymmetrical social interactions. In a similar vein, an analysis of historical narratives that either justify or challenge dependency is conducive to revealing how dependency may be embedded in (historical) discourses and ways of thinking. The eleven contributions in the volume approach these issues from various disciplinary vantage points, including theology, global history, Ottoman history, literary studies, and legal history. The authors address a wide range of different textual sources and historical contexts – from medieval Scandinavia and the Fatimid Empire to the history of abolition in Martinique and human rights violations in contemporary society. While the authors contribute innovative insights to ongoing discussions within their disciplines, the articles were also written with a view to the endeavor of furthering Dependency Studies as a transdisciplinary approach to the study of human societies past and present.

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ASYMMETRICAL DEPENDENCIES IN THE MAKING OF A GLOBAL COMMODITY: COFFEE IN THE LONGUE DURÉE

Volume 15 in the Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture Series
by Rafael de Bivar Marquese



Rafael de Bivar Marquese, *Asymmetrical Dependencies in the Making of a Global Commodity: Coffee in the Longue Durée* (Berlin: EBVERLAG, 2023) ISBN: 9783868934311

The present-day patterns of coffee production and consumption are rooted in the legacies of colonialism and slavery, but surprisingly the global history of the relationships between this commodity and slavery and other forms of asymmetrical dependencies has not been written yet. In this short monograph, Rafael de Bivar Marquese presents a proposal on how to do so. In its first part, it argues that historically specific forms of asymmetrically dependent labor that were mobilized for coffee production from the mid-sixteenth century to the late nineteenth century can be better understood from how they were situated in three different, global coffee economies that overlapped in this *longue durée*. The monograph presents an overview of each, highlighting their main characteristics and in particular the relationships between different labor regimes within each one of them. In its second part, it discusses the three main theoretical and methodological axes that guide the proposal.

Download via open access:



THE CHIMA FIEFDOM SYSTEM IN KANEM-BORNU AND ITS TRANSFORMATION INTO DISTRICT HEAD ADMINISTRATION IN BRITISH BORNO, NORTHERN NIGERIA (19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES)

Volume 16 in the Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture Series
by Ibrahim Maina Waziri



Ibrahim Maina Waziri, *The Chima Fiefdom System in Kanem-Bornu and its Transformation into District Head Administration in British Borno, Northern Nigeria* (Berlin: EBVERLAG, 2023) ISBN: 9783868934311

The study of the *Chima* system in pre-colonial and colonial Borno provides insights into how an administrative system, known as *Chima*, developed, how it was operated in the pre-colonial sub-Saharan African kingdom Kanem-Borno and subsequently transformed under British colonial rule in the 20th century. It explores the adoption and adaptation process of an indigenous form of 'absentee landlord' administration into the colonial administrative set-up of the policy of indirect rule or ruling indirectly. The new system evolved as the local government administration in Borno and the whole of Nigeria after independency in 1960, thereby adapting the pre-colonial *Chima* system into a colonial and post-colonial administrative system. The significance of this background history of Kanem-Borno is to show its importance in African history and its significant strategic location as a player in the relationship between North Africa, the Sahara Desert, and the Central Sudan in sub-Saharan Africa.

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CHRISTIAN BLUMENTHAL: THE POWER OF BIBLICAL AUTHORS. A RISK ANALYSIS OF 'LIVING' SACRED TEXTS

Volume 11 in the BCDSS Working Paper Series
by Christian Blumenthal



Christian Blumenthal, "The Power of Biblical Authors. A Risk Analysis of 'Living' Sacred Texts," *BCDSS Working Paper 11* (2023) ISSN 27479331

New Testament authors claim immense (interpretive) power and generate strong asymmetrical dependencies between themselves and the communities they address. They are convinced that they have the resource of 'salvation', the authentic interpretation of the Christ event and access to the congregation. In research, this mostly hidden and sometimes even veiled establishment of pronounced power and dependency structures has hardly been systematically investigated. This is all the more surprising as biblical texts continue to be used in Christian churches worldwide to consolidate and legitimise structures of power and authority. Against this background, I inquire about the susceptibility of 'living' sacred texts to abuse, and I examine these texts with regard to their potential for risk and danger.

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DEPENDENCY AT THE CENTRE AND PERIPHERY OF THE TIBETAN EMPIRE. SAYINGS, DOINGS AND INTERAGENCY

Volume 12 in the BCDSS Working Paper Series
by Lewis Doney



Lewis Doney,
"Dependency at the Centre
and Periphery of the Tibetan
Empire. Sayings, Doings and
Interagency,"
BCDSS Working Paper 12 (2023)
ISSN 27479331

What is it like to work on the edge of empire? This paper contrasts rhetoric with reality—the courtly self-representations of the Tibetan empire (ca. 600–850 CE) with lived experience in Dunhuang on its northeast border. It shows how the mostly ethnic Chinese subjects inhabiting this periphery were employed to copy Buddhist texts for the spiritual benefit of the Tibetan rulers, the relation of these scribes with each other and their editors, and how they saw their overlords right up to the emperors themselves. It thereby uncovers how Dunhuang scribes not only perpetuated systems of asymmetrical dependency, but also maintained some agency within them—through a certain freedom in their sayings, doings and inter-agency within this borderland work environment.

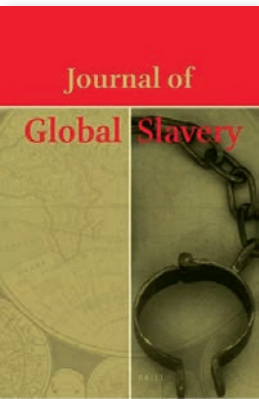


Download via open access:

THE ANALYTICAL CONCEPT OF ASYMMETRICAL DEPENDENCY

Journal article

by Julia Winnebeck, Ove Sutter, Adrian Hermann, Christoph Antweiler and Stephan Conermann



Winnebeck, J., Sutter, O.,
Hermann, A., Antweiler, C., &
Conermann, S., 2023. "The Ana-
lytical Concept of Asymmetrical
Dependency". *Journal of Global
Slavery*, 8(1), 1-59
Print-ISSN: 2405-8351

In response to critiques of the 'slavery versus freedom' binary and its limitations, researchers at the international Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) at the University of Bonn tentatively employ the analytical concept of 'asymmetrical dependency' in their investigations of coercive social relations, such as slavery, debt bondage, and servitude. This paper discusses some basic theoretical assumptions that undergird this analytical concept. In outlining an approach to asymmetrical dependency that is grounded in social and cultural theory, the goal is to provide a framework within which individual researchers can situate their projects and further develop their theoretical understanding of this phenomenon. To this end, first the analytical concept of asymmetrical dependency and explore its potential in light of the current state of research of slavery studies and related fields is introduced. The paper then conceptualizes asymmetrical dependency as a dynamic relational process and employ a chiefly praxeological methodology to identify and describe some fundamental dynamics of these relations. Finally, it is argued that the interdisciplinary study of asymmetrical dependency requires a broad practice of comparative analyses. The paper, therefore, considers several recent critiques of and models for comparison while relating them to the analytical concept of asymmetrical dependency we propose.

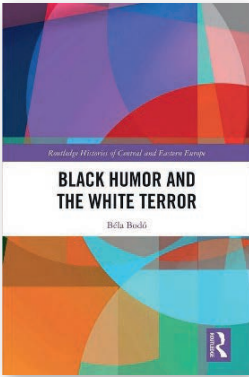


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This is a reworked
version of the
BCDSS Concept
Paper "On Asym-
metrical Depen-
dency", published
in 2021.

BLACK HUMOR AND THE WHITE TERROR

New book by Béla Bodó



Béla Bodó,
*Black Humor and the White
Terror*, Routledge Histories of
Central and Eastern Europe
(London: Routledge, 2023)
ISBN: 9781003224389

This book examines political humor as a reaction to the lost war, the post-war chaos, and antisemitic violence in Hungary between 1918 and 1922. While there is an increased body of literature on Jewish humor as a form of resistance and a means of resilience during the Holocaust, only a handful of studies have addressed Jewish humor as a reaction to physical attacks and increased discrimination in Europe during and after the First World War. The majority of studies have approached the issue of Jewish humor from an anthropological, cultural, or linguistic perspective; they have been interested in the humor of lower- or lower-middle-class Jews in the East European *shtetles* before 1914.

On the other hand, this study follows a historical and political approach to the same topic and focuses on the reaction of urban, middle-class, and culturally assimilated Jews to recent events: to the disintegration of the Dual Monarchy, the collapse of law and order, increased violence, the reversal of Jewish emancipation and the rise of new and more pernicious antisemitic prejudices. The study sees humor not only as a form of entertainment and jokes as literature and a product of popular culture, but also as a heuristic device to understand the world and make sense of recent changes, as well as a means to defend one's social position, individual and group identity, strike back at the enemy, and last but not least, to gain the support and change the hearts and minds of non-Jews and neutral bystanders. Unlike previous scholarly works on Jewish resistance during the Holocaust, this study sees Budapest Jewish humor after WWI as a joint adventure: as a product of urban and Hungarian culture, in which Jewish not only played an important role but also cofounded. Finally, the book addressed the issue of continuity in Hungarian history, the "twisted road to Auschwitz": whether urban Jewish humor, as a form of escapism, helped to desensitize the future victims of the Holocaust to the approaching danger, or it continued to play the same defensive and positive role in the interwar period, as it had done in the immediate aftermath of the Great War



Download via open access:

A CULTURAL HISTORY OF YOUTH IN ANTIQUITY

New book by Christian Laes and Ville Vuolanto



Christian Laes and
Ville Vuolanto (eds.),
*A Cultural History of Youth in
Antiquity*, The Cultural Histories
Series 1 (London: Bloomsbury,
2023)
ISBN: 9781350032972

This first volume of *A Cultural History of Youth* examines the ambiguity of youth in the ancient world, depictions of youth in literature, adult views of the young, agency and experience of young people, and the broader social contexts in which the cultural histories of the ancient world played out. Overall, this volume offers a dynamic account of youth in the ancient world, providing a detailed study of the 500BCE-500CE period, and allowing readers to trace representations and enactments of youth across time. While still concentrating on the Graeco-Roman world, this collection provides a more global approach to antiquity than previous work in the field.

Richly illustrated with images of statues, sculptures, friezes, and artefacts, this volume offers a detailed study of youth in ancient culture and covers its interactions with themes such as Concepts of Youth; Spaces and Places; Education and Work, Leisure and Play; Emotions; Gender, Sexuality and the Body; Belief and Ideology; Authority and Agency; War and Conflict; and Towards a Global History.



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TAUFE – EHE – TOD: PRAKTIKEN DES VERZEICHNENS IN FRÜHNEUZEITLICHEN KIRCHENBÜCHERN

'BAPTISM – MARRIAGE – DEATH: PRACTICES OF INDEXING IN EARLY MODERN CHURCH RECORDS'



Eva Marie Lehner, *Taufe – Ehe – Tod: Praktiken des Verzeichnens in frühneuzeitlichen Kirchenbüchern*, Historische Wissenschaften 22 (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2023) ISBN: 9783835353800

New book by Eva Marie Lehner

In the 16th century, Protestant and Catholic pastors began to register their parishioners. On the basis of baptisms, weddings and funerals, they not only recorded important church rituals, but also created the first comprehensive civil registers: church registers. Eva Marie Lehner examines for the first time the beginnings of church accounting in the 16th and 17th centuries. In doing so, she investigates the possible reasons why church staff systematically began documenting personal data. In addition, it shows which categories (gender, status, religion, marital status, body, salvation, etc.) were related to each other in order to identify persons. The research work makes visible differences between pre-modern and modern categories of personal registration as well as their fundamental changeability and negotiability. Thus, the reading offers an incentive to classify current discussions about personal data and identity in a longer historical development and to better understand.



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REPENSANDO LA SOCIEDAD COLONIAL: PERSPECTIVAS, ABORDAJES Y DESAFÍOS DE LOS ENFOQUES MULTIDISCIPLINARES – PERÚ Y NUEVA ESPAÑA, SIGLOS XVI–XVIII



Karoline Noack and Ana María Presta (eds.), *Repensando la sociedad colonial: Perspectivas, abordajes y desafíos de los enfoques multidisciplinares*, Interdisciplinary Studies on Latin America, Vol. 7 (Bonn: V&R unipress, 2023) ISBN: 9783847115762

'RETHINKING COLONIAL SOCIETY: PERSPECTIVES, APPROACHES AND CHALLENGES OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES – PERU AND NEW SPAIN, XVI–XVIII CENTURIES'

New book by Karoline Noack and Ana María Presta

The book analyzes the colonial period in its social diversity, contextualizes the historical moment in which it emerged, and conceptualizes this era in terms of its epistemological variables. The colonial difference that appears among them created racialized subjects. Figures such as that of the noble savage are extraordinarily enduring, and despite the constantly changing temporal and spatial contexts, they can still be activated to this day. The questions that colonial authorities explored as part of the imagination of society begin by inquiring who the "Indians" were and how they could ultimately be integrated. From multidisciplinary perspectives, the contributions present case studies for a new understanding of the colonial period, which also includes insights into the present.



Download via open access:

LEGES DRACONIS ET SOLONIS (LEGDRSOL): EINE NEUE EDITION DER GESETZE DRAKONS UND SOLONS MIT ÜBERSETZUNG UND HISTORISCHER EINORDNUNG

('LEGES DRACONIS ET SOLONIS (LEGDRSOL): A NEW EDITION OF THE LAWS OF DRACON AND SOLON WITH TRANSLATION AND HISTORICAL CLASSIFICATION.')



Winfried Schmitz, *Leges Draconis et Solonis (LegDrSol): Eine neue Edition der Gesetze Drakons und Solons*, Historia Einzelschriften 270 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2023) ISBN: 9783515133616

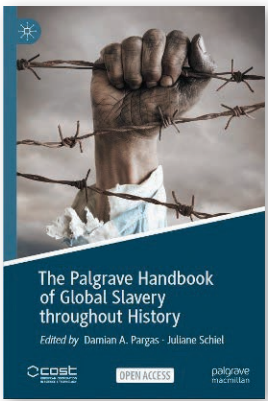
New book by Winfried Schmitz

The authors provide a new edition of all fragments of the laws of Dracon and Solon with the original Greek and Latin text, a German translation and a detailed commentary as well as a historical classification. The new edition reveals new interpretations for many fragments of the laws. This allows a fundamentally new historical assessment of the legislators Dracon and Solon and their legislation and a more accurate record of the political, economic and social problems in Athens during this period. The edition gives a new perspective on the phase of the writing of ancient law in the late 7th and early 6th centuries B.C.E. – in response to pressing problems. Laws on homicide and the establishment of a tyranny, provisions on admission to political office, on procedural law and permissible self-power, on the calendar of sacrifices and religious offenses, on cowardice before the enemy, on sexual offenses, on acts of violence, theft, and insult, on contract law, and on family law are covered. The law fragments are of central importance also for the debt law in Solonian times. A small part of the approximately 150 fragments of Solonian laws deals with regulations on slaves and free servants.



THE PALGRAVE HANDBOOK OF GLOBAL SLAVERY THROUGHOUT HISTORY

New book by Damian A. Pargas and Juliane Schiel (eds.)



Damian A. Pargas and Juliane Schiel (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Slavery throughout History* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023) ISBN: 9783031132605

This open access handbook takes a comparative and global approach to analyze the practice of slavery throughout history. To understand slavery – why it developed, and how it functioned in various societies – is to understand an important and widespread practice in world civilizations. With research traditionally being dominated by the Atlantic world, this collection aims to illuminate slavery that existed in not only the Americas but also ancient, medieval, North and sub-Saharan African, Near Eastern, and Asian societies. Connecting civilizations through migration, warfare, trade routes and economic expansion, the practice of slavery integrated countries and regions through power-based relationships, whilst simultaneously dividing societies by class, race, ethnicity and cultural group. Uncovering slavery as a globalizing phenomenon, the authors highlight the slave-trading routes that crisscrossed Africa, helped integrate the Mediterranean world, connected Indian Ocean societies and fused the Atlantic world. Split into five parts, the handbook portrays the evolution of slavery from antiquity to the contemporary era and encourages readers to realize similarities and differences between various manifestations of slavery throughout history. Providing a truly global coverage of slavery, and including thematic injections within each chronological part, this handbook is a comprehensive and transnational resource for all researchers interested in slavery, the history of labor, and anthropology.





CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

We want our conference reports to showcase the wide thematic range covered by our Cluster of Excellence. Researchers from various disciplines approach the topic of strong asymmetrical dependency through a variety of questions and perspectives across different epochs. Throughout the year, the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies organizes conferences with international scholars to enable this multi-disciplinary approach, flanked by series of workshops, seminars, lectures and panel discussions. The core questions and findings of these events will be found in the following pages.

THE EMOTIONS OF ANTI-CHOREOGRAPHY: SLAVERY AND RESISTIVE MOVEMENT IN THE ROMAN WORLD

by Laurie Venters

The City of the Lily (*la città dei Giglio*) or, relieved of its floral moniker, Florence; today as much esteemed for its romantic ambiance as for its Renaissance flare. Spanning the blue wash of the Arno, four bridges link the cleaved heart of the old town, with the Ponte Vecchio – a tiered cake-like edifice of shuttered goldsmiths and ochre-washed jewellers – bearing the heaviest footfall. Looking north from the terrace of the Boboli Gardens' Kaffeehaus, domes and bell towers litter the skyline, a view interrupted only by wayward selfie sticks held aloft like rapiers glinting in the late August sun. You get the idea.

So, what brings us to Florence? Well, aside from the city's art-historical mystique, I was there to attend the Society for the History of Emotions' (SHE) third biennial conference. Last year's meeting (30th August–2nd September) – centred around the interrelated themes of mobility, migration, and exile – urged participants to reflect on the emotional stimuli undergirding the movement of historical actors, both distant and near contemporary.

Semantic evolution occasionally yields an accidental poetry. Remove the "e" from "emotion" and you are left with a synonym for movement. The English words "emotion" and "motion" share a common Latin route, the noun *motio* (nominative singular), connoting both kinetic activity and the affective workings of the soul. The mutual etymological ancestry of emotion and motion inadvertently preserves the entwinement of two concepts close to the heart of the human experience – the ability to move and be moved.

For the majority of slaves (*servi*) in the classical Roman world however, delimited mobility was a fact of life. Masters (*domini*) took pains to control the physical movement of their chattel, implementing a sophisticated range of containment strategies. Bonded persons engaged on the *villa rustica* (farming estate), for instance, were monitored by overseers (*villici*), locked away at night in secure accommodation, and perhaps even shackled with iron fetters.¹ Domestic slaves in the households of the urban elite fared little better, nego-



Copper alloy slave tag dating from the fourth century CE. The inscription reads, "Hold me, lest I flee, and return me to my master Viventius on the estate of Callistus" (*Tene me ne fugia(m) et revoca me ad dom(i)num Viventium in ar(e)a Callisti*). Property of the British Museum, invv. no. 1975,0902.6.

tiating doorkeepers (*ostiarum*), enforced curfews, and truancy punishments. As a case in point, the antihero of Petronius' (ca. 27–66 CE) novel the *Satyricon* – i.e. the exuberantly rich freedman Trimalchio – hangs the following sign in the entryway of his townhouse:

Quisquis servus sine dominico iussu foras exierit accipiet plagas centum.

Any slave who goes outside without his master's permission will receive one hundred lashes. [Petronius, *Satyricon*, 28.7]²

Hence, whether through surveillance or physical and psychological disciplining, servile activity was meaningfully curtailed. While much ink has been expelled on the proficiency of slaves in creating "rival geographies" (spaces originating with subaltern groups that ran contrary to the ideals and demands of the master class), little has been written in regard to the emotions underpinning acts of resistive movement.³ My presentation served as an initial attempt to locate the emotional regimen of anti-choreography, that is the movement of bonded men and women outside of prescribed limits. More specifically, I focused on what inspired *servi* to risk breaking script, what feelings and desires impelled their

movements; ranging from the extremes of abscondence to nocturnal escapades beyond the villa walls.

Let us consider a first example. In his treatise on farm management, the agronomist Columella (b. 4 CE) bemoans the corruptibility of metropolitan slaves, lambasting their poor work ethic and unending love of vice.

Socors et somniculosum genus id mancipiorum, otiis, campo, circo, theatris, aleae, popinae, lupanaribus consuetum, numquam non easdem ineptias somniat [...]

This sluggish and sleepy-headed class of slaves, accustomed to leisure, to the Campus, the Circus, the theatres, to gambling, to cookshops, to brothels, never ceasing to dream of these follies.

[Columella, *De re rustica*, 1.8.2.]

Leaving aside the obvious prejudices and hyperbole of Columella's writing, we are furnished with an unusual insight with respect to those activities *domini* believed their slaves participated in after dark. Attending the Circus Maximus (where chariot races were held) or gambling and cavorting with sex workers in backstreet taverns are not, on the face of it, unimaginable pastimes. However, would slaves really have been afforded leeway to enjoy such diversions? And what sentiments prompted them to do so? Regarding the former, a slave could well have used his *peculium* (savings or property accrued with the master's consent) to fund private rev- elries, or embezzled a little of his owner's money. One slave accountant is known to have fixed his master's books so as to disguise his siphoning of cash to pay for a *muliercula* (lit. "little woman," i.e. a prostitute).⁴ To hazard a guess, the emotional bedrock on which divertissements of this sort were founded might be understood as a longing for relief or respite; a temporary escape from a life generally characterised by subordination and inferiority.

Bonded men and women seeking a more permanent degree of freedom may instead have opted to run away. Flight was a highly emotional response to the tribulations of servitude and pursued on a variety of grounds. Dionysius, a *servus* belonging to the Republican aristocrat and statesman Cicero (106–43 BCE), absconded from his master in the expectation of an impending punishment.

Dionysius, servus meus, qui meam bibliothecen multorum nummorum tractavit, cum multos libros surripuisset nee se impune laturum putarct, aufugit.

My slave Dionysius, who was in charge of my very costly library, having secretly stolen a multitude of books and thinking he wouldn't go unpunished for the theft, has absconded.

[Cicero, *Epistulae ad Familiares*, 13.77.3.]

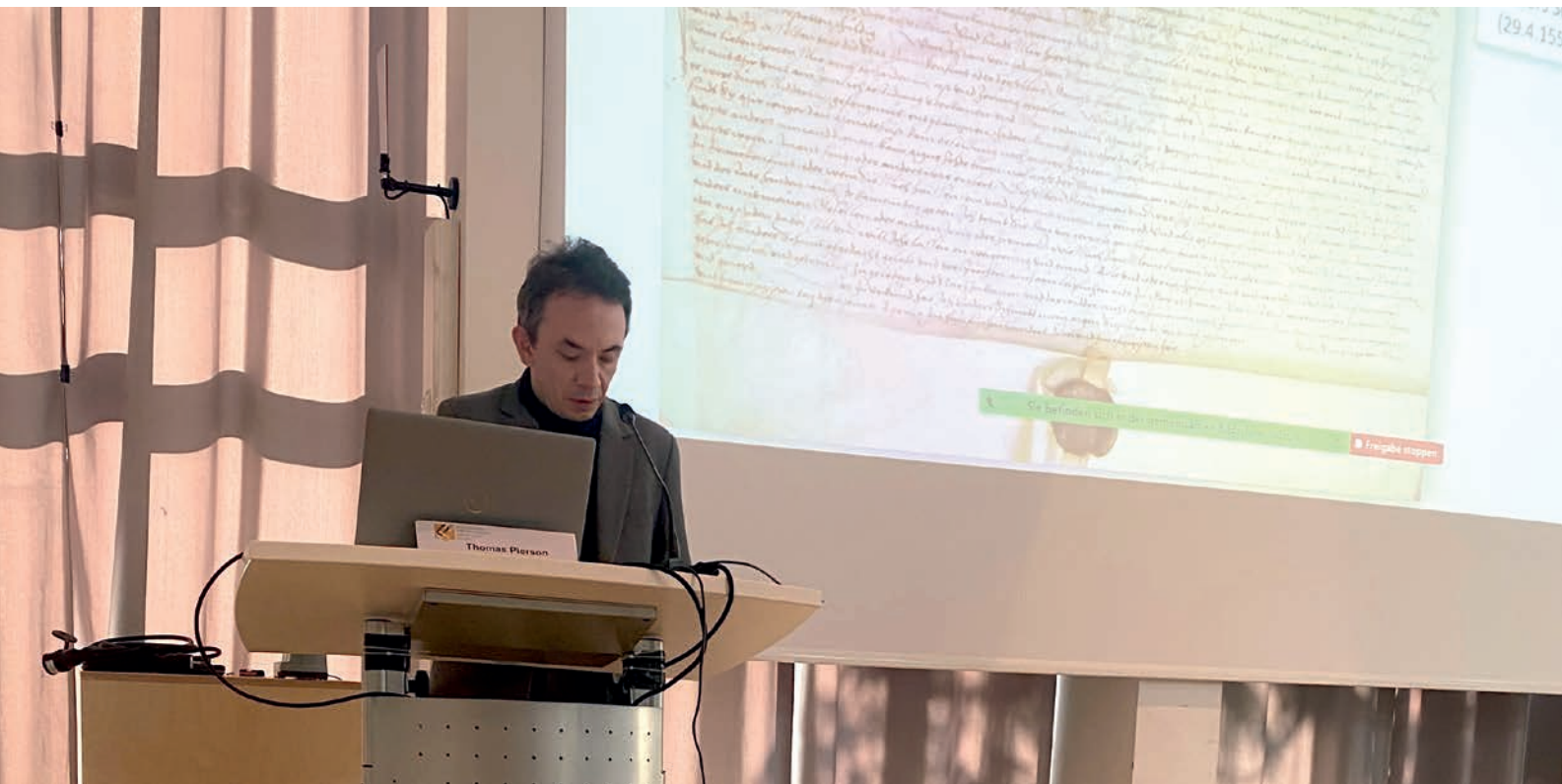
Reading Cicero's words against the grain, fear is evidently foregrounded as the stimulus for Dionysius' escape. Running away was fraught with risk, *servi fugitivi* (runaway slaves) being, if caught, harshly punished with facial tattoos (*stigmata*) or, during the later Empire, the fitting of iron collars (see fig.). Nevertheless, for some bondspeople, including Dionysius, the anticipation of a beating or whipping seemingly outweighed the perilousness of capture.

From these two short literary examples, it is clear that sensitivity to the emotional disposition of slaves can augment our understanding of resistive movement. Indeed, anti-choreography spotlights the affective entanglement of the interior and exterior worlds of *servi*, providing us with a lens through which to investigate, from the viewpoint of the enslaved, those feelings attendant to space and place.



Laurie Venters

is a fourth year PhD researcher at the BCDSS. His research engages with issues of slavery, gender, and sexuality in the classical Roman world and early imperial China.



Thomas Pierson, Uni Giessen

“NORMS, INSTITUTIONS, AND PRACTICES OF DEPENDENCY”

by Julia Hillner and Julia Winnebeck

BCDSS ANNUAL CONFERENCE, BONN 21-22 SEPTEMBER 2022

What role do normative concepts and institutional regulations play in creating, shaping and consolidating relations of asymmetrical dependency? Over the course of the academic year 2021–2022, researchers at the BCDSS focused on the interplay of norms, institutions and practices of dependency. An international conference marked the end of this period, assembling the expertise of researchers from a range of different fields whose contributions spanned the time from antiquity to the 19th century and covered geographical areas from the Near East to the West Indies. The conference thus invited both a long view and an interdisciplinary approach.

The sociologist Rudolf Stichweh opened the conference with a presentation of his own “Theory of Norms and Institutions of Dependency”. He analysed the ways in which institutions of strong asymmetrical dependency are embedded in the societies from which they emerge and tried to identify universal features of strong asymmetrical dependencies that would allow for comparison across regions and time periods. The discussion of his theoretical model centered on the contention that every human being experiences dependencies every day, but that most of these are not asymmetrical. He also maintained that relations of asymmetrical dependency in pre-modern times were radically different to those of modernity.

The first of altogether three panels focused on structures of dependency in the ecclesiastical realm. Jennifer Glancy from Le Moyne College, USA, dealt with the problem of the literal and cultural translation of biblical norms of slavery and unfreedom from one context into another. She explored how translators of the legal codes in Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy reflected on slaving practices in the Ancient Near East, including, for example, the condition of enslaved wives in polygamous households. The decisions made in translating the Pentateuch into Greek in the 3rd century BCE suggest a process of interpretation that was not only linguistic but also cultural. This process continued with expansions and interpretations of biblical texts in the Greco-Roman world, as textual details were modified in a way consistent with later law and custom. According to Glancy, the interpretive choices made by ancient translators and other writers have implications for the diachronic and cross-cultural study of slaving and other asymmetric systems of domination—and perhaps even for our ability to offer a transhistorical definition of slavery.

Thomas Graumann from the Humboldt University of Berlin and University of Cambridge explored hierarchies, asymmetries and dependencies in the Councils of the Early Church. He described the council of Chalcedon in 451 as a gathering of bishops, clerics and monks from various different regions, theological factions and social and cultural backgrounds. In their complex interactions, one can observe the (re-)negotiation of former and new hierarchical dependency relations. For example, the council records show that bishops made use of a rhetoric of dependency (signalling obedience or mercy) when describing the desired conduct of church representatives. Graumann also presented the striking example of a group of Egyptian bishops who found themselves entangled in competing dependency constellations and showed that attempts to resist the demands of either the council or their home church came with serious, life-threatening consequences, or at least the fear of these.

The lecture of Rob Meens from Utrecht University on “Confession, Authority, and Masculinity in the Early Middle Ages” concluded the first panel. He examined a Carolingian penitential, the so-called *Excarpsus Cummeani*, for different masculinities and contrasted the ideal man with the emasculated penitent. In doing so, he characterized penance as an act of divesting oneself of one’s own male power. The discussion that followed emphasized that penance here appears as a voluntary performative act which is perhaps best understood as a privilege of the free male. In contrast, “real dependents”, i.e., women, slaves and children, could not even claim agency for their sin in the system of early medieval penance. In this way, Meens’ paper directly linked to

ongoing research at the BCDSS on dependent people’s access to penance.

The second panel was dedicated to the investigation of legal constructions of dependency. Legal historian Martin Schermaier, BCDSS, University of Bonn, explored the concept of property for the definition of slavery in antiquity. According to Schermaier, various taxonomies for defining slavery that have been put forward by historians, sociologists and anthropologists are dominated by the Roman concept of property (*dominium*). This concept is thought to be responsible for the arbitrary treatment of slaves in European history. In deconstructing the concept of *dominium*, Schermaier revealed a range of other essential notions characterizing a Roman slave which might be illuminative for the study of slavery in other times and societies. In particular, he reminded the audience that slavery was only one form of dependency in the Roman household.

Following Schermaier’s lecture, Andreas Thier from the University of Zurich analysed the legal constructions of dependency in medieval feudal law, which regulated the legal relationship between vassals and their liege lords. It emerged in the early Middle Ages and was fully developed from about the 12th century onward. The feudal relationship was determined by the subjection of the vassal to the feudal lord, but also by mutual obligations of both parties. While the asymmetrical dependency of the vassals on the lords formed the basis of feudal law, the vassals’ dependency was increasingly diminished by regulatory approaches such as the link between feudal possession and the obligation to vassalitic allegiance. Over time, feudal law became an expression of a noble culture of social order, for which the idea of subordination and mutual dependence of the rulers and the ruled was essential.

The legal historian Thomas Pierson from Giessen University offered a case comparison from Early Modern Frankfurt for contractually defined dependencies. He discussed the examples of the contractual obligations of a horse doctor, a granary clerk (*Kornschreiber*) and a carpenter by presenting and analysing the respective charters. Pierson argued that the impossibility of exiting these contracts bound the individuals in legally defined relations of asymmetrical dependency. At the same time, he demonstrated that the agency of these dependents to forego the offer of “freedom” could serve as was a way to secure them a sort of retirement. In the final lecture of the second panel, Ludolf Pelizeus, University of Picardie Jules Verne, Amiens, discussed the freedom to remain unfree in the 18th century Holy Roman Empire.

In his talk, he critically evaluated the concept of freedom in connection with the concepts of “slavery” and

"serfdom". Building on Rebecca von Mallinckrodt's work – according to which the problem of a more careful juridical distinction between serfdom and slavery only became virulent from the end of the 18th century onwards, as slavery was not only tacitly but explicitly admissible in the Holy Roman Empire – he also explored the question of why some enslaved Africans and serfs resisted their liberation.

The third and final panel was dedicated to relations of dependency in the context of colonialism. Trevor Burnard from the Wilberforce Institute of the University of Hull explored the implications of a fundamental shift in transatlantic slavery studies. He argued that the model type of an enslaved person has changed from being the acculturated and Creole antebellum southern slave, living in worlds where the violence of slavery was as much psychological as physical, to the alienated and African enslaved person, living in barely institutionalised but highly capitalist eighteenth-century Caribbean plantations in which violence was physical much more than psychological. His paper explored the implications of this fundamental shift, which also meant that the enslaved began to envisage a life without a dependency system.



Conference participants Rob Meens, David B. Smith, Henriette von Harnier, Tatiana Seijas

Afterwards, Tatiana Seijas, from Rutgers State University of New Jersey, examined the experiences of children who were captured at the frontiers of the 16th and 17th century Spanish Empire. Some of these children were declared slaves, while others became wards of the people who held them as bonded servants for a set number of years. Their initial legal classification, based on whether they were acquired during an officially sanctioned "just war" or not, determined the course of their lives. In detailing the struggle of indigenous people to claim their rights in the exploitative system of colonialism, Seijas shed light on relations of asymmetrical dependency, which were much lesser known than racialized slavery.

In the final talk of this panel, Josef Köstlbauer, BCDSS, University of Bonn, offered an analysis of the ambiguities of slave ownership of the Moravian Church. The

eighteenth-century Moravian Church is widely known for its missionary zeal, its peculiar eschatological vision and a seemingly egalitarian rhetoric. From 1732 onwards, the Moravians established successful mission congregations among the enslaved in the Caribbean and in British North America, but they very soon became slave and plantation owners themselves. Köstlbauer discussed the Moravian perceptions of the enslavement of fellow Christians and the ensuing ambiguous and conflicting situations faced by both missionaries and enslaved Moravians.

The conference concluded with a lively final discussion, which was inspired by the historian Julia Hillner, BCDSS, University of Bonn, who summarized her impressions of the conference. She encouraged participants to think further about the relationship between law and asymmetrical dependency: Did laws create asymmetrical dependency, or did – as Martin Schermaier suggested – asymmetrical dependency arise from (ever-changing) social practices which were then regulated or removed by law? Were informal relationships that fell outside what written law covered more pervasive because they were less visible (also to modern scholars)? And did it matter to people subject to asymmetrical dependency whether what happened to them was legal or not? The answers to these questions may also help us to understand the impact of modern-day slavery because many papers at this conference showed that in order to exit a relationship of asymmetrical dependency, it was not enough to have rights, but the individuals in question needed the ability to claim these rights. These questions also direct the attention back to the agency of dependents and the need to understand this agency within the legal, social and cultural logics of their time.



Prof. Dr. Julia Hillner

took up the position of Professor of Dependency and Slavery Studies (Imperial Rome, Late Antiquity) in October 2021 and is Research Area E Representative. Prior to that she was a Heinz Heinen Fellow at the BCDSS. She works predominantly on the transformations of the family and the household in the period 300–750 and how these are reflected in legal norms and practices.



Dr. Julia Winnebeck

heads the research group „Structures of Dependency in the Late Antique and Early Medieval Western Church" at the BCDSS since September 2019. Her research interests include the history of penance, crime, and punishment and the Church's handling of slavery in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages.



Some of the workshop speakers and participants

SLAVERY, LAW AND RELIGION IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD

by Eva Lehner, Turkana Allahverdiyeva, Bahar Bayraktaroğlu

WORKSHOP AT UCLouvain, LOUVAIN-LA-NEUVE, 8–9 MARCH 2023

The University of Catholic Louvain in Belgium hosted an international workshop called "Slavery, Law and Religion in the Early Modern Period" on 8–9 March 2023. Christoph Haar (University of Würzburg) organized the event. The interdisciplinary nature of this workshop facilitated the convergence of experts from various fields – such as cultural, intellectual, religious, and legal history – who focus on early modern colonial and Christian slavery. Turkana Allahverdiyeva, Bahar Bayraktaroğlu, and Eva Lehner were among the participants who chaired some panels and presented their scholarly research at the workshop.

Turkana asked the question on whether it would be possible to hear the subaltern in the early 18th century Crimean Khanate by uncovering their voices in the court registers and what their voices might tell us about the legal and social history of slavery. The Crimean Khanate organized slave raids in its neighborhoods in

the 15th–18th centuries, and thousands of kidnapped people were subjected to slavery and shipped to the Ottoman lands every year. Through selected Qadi court registers, Turkana tried to show what slaves went through, how they resisted, and how their forms of agency differed based on their gender. The displaced enslaved people, who predominantly came from Eastern Europe and weren't Muslims, were mostly ignored, and their voices weren't heard in the margins of society. Turkana's goal was to give those people their voices back, let them be heard, and figure out how enslavement functioned in the legal and social contexts of the early modern Black Sea Region.

Bahar's paper explored the origins of the *pencik* system, a practice that was instituted in the early Ottoman Empire. This name, rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an, legitimized the Ottoman sultans' right to appropriate one-fifth of the war spoils into the imperial treasury. The Ottoman Empire in its formative years sought to bolster its military and administrative prowess by utilizing a unique method of conscription. The state, through a system known as the *pencik*, recruited prisoners of war who were primarily non-Muslims hailing from the Balkans and Eastern Europe, ranging in age from 7 to 70 years old. As time passed, the right to *pencik* became formalized through legislation. In essence, the *pencik* system laid the foundation for the renowned *devşirme*, or child levy, a practice that followed. Drawing on primary sources from the contemporary written teachings of Islam in Anatolia, written in Persian, Arabic, and Old Turkish, Bahar persuasively questioned their legal basis and argued that the Ottomans legally had no right to apply the *pencik* system. Through this thought-provoking analysis, Bahar shed new light on a crucial aspect of Ottoman history and expanded our understanding of the cultural and political context in which the *pencik* system emerged.

Eva's paper examined dependency and religion in Cape Town during Dutch colonialism in the 18th century. The population in Cape Town at the time was highly diverse, which included the local indigenous Khoikhoi, Europeans from different countries, and enslaved and dependent people from Asia and Africa. All these people had different religious beliefs and practices. However, the officially recognized religion was the Dutch Reformed Church. Since enslaved people were not allowed to marry, living a good Christian life was almost impossible. And with exiled and enslaved people from Islamized regions in Southeast Asia and South Asia being imported to Cape Town, Islam became the religion of freed ex-slaves and most of the enslaved population. Manifestations of the various religions being practiced were the multi-religious use of burial grounds, Christian and Muslim schools for enslaved children, mixed family formations and practices, the

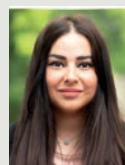
colonial punishment system referring to Christian ideas of the soul, and revolting and resisting practices that referred to everyday Muslim spirituality. By conceptualizing religion as lived, materialized, and embodied practices, the paper shifted the focus from theology and ideas to what people did religiously.

As a group, we feel incredibly fortunate to have had the opportunity to attend and present our work at the workshop. Not only did we have the chance to network with other scholars in our field, but we also received valuable feedback on our research and gained new insights into different forms of slavery. The stimulating discussions throughout the workshop allowed us to expand our understanding and challenge our perspectives. Furthermore, the experience has given us a greater appreciation for the importance of collaboration and exchanging ideas in our academic pursuits. Overall, it was an enriching experience!



Dr. Eva Marie Lehner

is a historian and postdoctoral researcher at the BCDSS since 2021. Her research interests cover early modern history, gender and body history, and the history of slavery and dependency. In her current research project, she investigates dependencies and resistance during the Dutch colonial period (1662–1795) in Cape Town, South Africa.



Turkana Allahverdiyeva

is PhD researcher at the BCDSS. Her research focus lies on 'Non-elite Household Slavery in Crimean Khanate in 1700–1720'. Her research sheds light on various aspects of slavery, including the lives of non-elite slaves, manumission practices, slave raids, asymmetrical dependency, agency, and the mobility of slaves within this particular historical context.



Bahar Bayraktaroğlu

is PhD researcher at the BCDSS, engaged in investigating the historical aspects of juvenile enslavement and their corresponding experiences of dependence within late Ottoman Istanbul. Her research endeavors focus on the intricate dynamics of household servitude, the plight of children entrapped in bondage, the role of slave traders, the agency demonstrated by the enslaved, and the multifaceted nature of dependency.



Mémorial Anse Cafard

COMPETING MEMORIES: THE POLITICS OF REMEMBERING ENSLAVEMENT, EMANCIPATION, AND INDENTURESHIP IN THE CARIBBEAN

by Sofia Buitrago and Ankit Chowdhury

CONFERENCE REPORT

The international conference "Competing Memories: The Politics of Remembering Enslavement, Emancipation, and Indentureship in the Caribbean" took place at the University of Bonn from March 29 to 31, 2023. The event allowed around seventy speakers, organizers and participants to meet fellow researchers with a focus on Caribbean studies. Participants came from Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, France, Germany, Martinique, Suriname, Switzerland, the US and the UK. It was enriching to discuss current approaches to remembrance and memory in and on the Caribbean. The conference was organized by Sinah Kloß, Andrea Gremels and Ulrike Schmieder, co-hosted by the BCDSS and the Society for Caribbean Research (Socare e.V.) and funded by the BCDSS and DFG (German Research Foundation). Memory, reparation, archives, heritage, literature and gender were the principal topics emphasized at the event. In eleven panels and two keynote talks, the participants discussed the Caribbean as a space of dynamic and ever-changing memories. They noted

that here as elsewhere, socio-political disparities and power imbalances commonly impact the capacity and means to promote specific memories and historical narratives, through which the past is created, adapted and negotiated. The event focused on the politics of memory and the constructions and representations of plural and divergent memories, especially but not exclusively in relation to enslavement, emancipation and indentureship.

Memories can construct ideas of a nation, history, or society. When memories are used to establish such important social concepts and dynamics, questions have to be raised. To open the conference, Hanétha Vété-Congolo reflected on the concept of memory in her key note talk and asked who and what is being remembered, and who and what has been erased from the production of historical narratives and practices of memory-making? For what purpose? Memories and national histories that only consider a popular or dominant perspective may silence other voices. She reminded the audience that although in political contexts memory is usually linked to competition and conflict, memories are not meant to compete; instead, they are, according to Vété-Congolo, made to compete to serve a specific objective. Discussing how racism also had its roots in colonialism, involving systemic subjugation and exploitation, she explained how the effects of colonialism are still being felt, for example in contemporary French society and its commemorative culture by descendants of the colonized, enslaved and indentured.

Considering memories not as something owned but something done, practices of memory-making invite us to reflect on the (a-)symmetrical dependencies and power dynamics involved in processes of remembering, forgetting, memorizing, recollecting and commemorating. Memories are constructed, expressed and transmitted in narratives, art, historiography, literature and film, journalistic media and other kinds of representation. In the panel "Remembrance and Visions of Africa in Cuba," Ana Mateos, Vanessa Ohlraun and Marcela Andrade contextualized these various ways of memory-making in Cuba. Highlighting the fact that memories are arbitrary, flexible, and open to reinterpretation, the contributors discussed how the African past was and is reimagined and reinterpreted through a variety of cultural methods, including music, dance, religion, visual arts, and literature and film.

Literature also played a key role in the conference in contexts of enslavement and memory. Among the issues discussed were the ability of literature to illustrate the history of enslavement from different perspectives and how this may affect readers, and the close relation between literature and laws. For

example, in the panel "The Politics of Narrative," Marie Berndt, Miriam Lay Brander and Kathleen Gyssels discussed the power of literature to influence laws, as in the case with the "Taubira law". The law seeks to debate and discuss slavery in schools and programs related to social sciences. As well as the importance of including the topic in the curricula. Thanks to Christiane Taubira's book *L'esclavage raconté à ma fille*, the "Taubira law" today exists in France. The panels on "Oral History and Testimony" (Francisco Aiello, Juan Felipe Castro Maldonado) and "Conflicting Memories and Reparations" (Zuleica Romay Guerra, Mario Laarmann) concluded that literature can also be seen as a way to comprehend, remember, and revitalize the history of slavery. It can also be a way to address the topic of reparation, which not only has an economic but also psychological dimension (Romay Guerra). In the panel "Memories and Narratives of the Haitian Revolution," Adrian Robanus and Anja Bandau drew attention to (literary) representations of the Haitian revolution in early accounts of the events in Haiti (Bandau) and in Heinrich von Kleist's novella *The Betrothal in St. Domingo* (1811).

Given that in the Caribbean today, there may be competing memories of plantation slavery and the system of indentureship, the panel "Plural Memories and Indenture" – with contributions by Jarula Wegner, Sandrine Soukaï and María del Pilar Kaladeen – drew attention to how such memories are negotiated, shared and contested and how they have been transformed over time. This continued the discussion of the panel "Nation-Building and Multilingualism of Memory," which explored these practices and similar dynamics in the context of the Dutch- and Papiamentu-speaking Caribbean, for example in Suriname (Maurits Hassankhan) and in the novels of Frank Martinus Arion of Curaçao (Ineke Phaf-Rheinberger).

Memory-making is present and represented in monuments, archives and museums; it also exists as the material remains of the antagonistic lives of the enslaved and enslavers. These sites are implemented, removed, contested and remodeled all over the Caribbean, its diasporas and in former colonizing countries. Therefore, on the second day of the conference, one of the central topics were archives. The panel "History and Archives" (Asma Hussein, Teresa Göttl, Ulrike Mühlischlegel) highlighted the importance of archives as valuable sources in the construction of memory. The speakers agreed that there are two objectives that have to be pursued: to make archives accessible and to decolonize archives, for which dialogue and exchange remain of utmost importance. Testimonies of enslaved persons in trials against enslavers may be valuable sources for understanding enslavement according to Göttl and help to challenge dominant narratives. Not only archives, but also museums continue to promote

imperialism as Mühlischlegel argues. For this reason, the role of museums in the process of remembering slavery was also discussed.

Jessica Pierre-Louis, Ulrike Schmieder and Julia Nitz on the panel "Museums, Statues, and Heritage Sites" discussed sites of memory-making, especially the role of museums in the process of remembering enslavement and emancipation. Ulrike Schmieder emphasized that there are two key elements that need to be changed to continue and facilitate the decolonization of museums: the itinerary and the discourse. Careful attention should be paid to how and when to refer to enslaved people. For example, in Cuba, Martinique and France, slaves are hardly mentioned in national or public contexts. As a result, people have to find ways to express themselves and their roots, for instance by personally collecting objects relating to their family's enslavement and creating 'grassroots' collections and museums. In Martinique, visitors have shown a positive reaction to more critical exhibitions as demonstrated by Jessica Pierre-Louis.

Drawing on yet another aspect of the material culture of remembrance and memory, Olívia Gomes da Cunha explained in her key note talk the relation between body and soil, and how this influences processes of remembering and memorizing. Based on rich ethnographic data from Suriname, Olívia explained how non-human entities, including ancestors, inhabit the soil and the earth. When humans digest clay, a connection between the human body and these non-human entities is created. Those who have eaten the clay have the ability to experience the past: Memories, feelings and emotions of their ancestors and non-human beings. This already indicates that the process of remembering goes beyond the physical and material world. The relevance of the earth and its resources in practices of memory-making were also discussed in the panel "Like a Plantation-Machine: The Remakings of the Earth and the Plantatiocene" (Clémence Léobal, Rogério Viana). That gender and the role of women against patriarchal colonial rule are extremely important in remembering was stressed in the panel "Historic Memory and Gender" (Jennifer Leetsch, Chrisan Blake, Andrea Gremels). Jennifer Leetsch examined the works of Mary Prince, in which Prince described her life and experiences as an enslaved person in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the British colonies. She rose to prominence in the abolitionist movement, continuously challenging the colonial power. Discussing the poetics and politics of witchcraft as a form of resistance and female emancipation, Andrea Gremels analyzed Maryse 'Condé's novel "Moi, Tituba, Sorcière," a fictionalized account of the life of Tituba, an enslaved African-Caribbean woman who was jailed as a witch during the 1692 Salem trials. Gremels contended that Tituba's use of

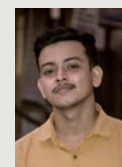
witchcraft was a threat to colonial America's patriarchal power systems, stressing the enormous contribution of female writers in the memory and history of the Caribbean.

Overall, the conference was a thought-provoking and insightful event. International academics and researchers gathered to debate the complex histories and legacies of remembrance and memory in the Caribbean and investigated how these histories continue to influence modern Caribbean societies. Throughout the conference, participants had lively discussions about how race, gender, class, and power intersect and how these forces have shaped and continue to shape the lives of Caribbean people. The conference provided a deep and comprehensive assessment of the past and present of the Caribbean, ranging from debates of the effects of colonialism and enslavement in the region to analyses of the role of religion, culture, and important personalities in Caribbean communities through literature.



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EVENTS & PREVIEW

SECOND HALF OF 2023

July 5, 2023

ASIA WORKSHOP

Organized by Jeannine Bischoff (Managing Director) and Claude Chevalyre (Fellow)

July 13-15, 2023

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP AT THE BCDSS

HYBRID EVENT

Organized by Emma Kalb (Postdoc, BCDSS), Eva Lehner (Postdoc, BCDSS), and Nabhojeet Sen (PhD Researcher, BCDSS)

August 3rd, 2023

"WORKINGMAN'S DEATH" FILM SCREENING/ DISCUSSION

Joint film and discussion series by Förderverein Filmkultur Bonn and the BCDSS, depicting precarious labor conditions around the world.

Location: Kino in der Brotfabrik, Kreuzstraße 16, 53225 Bonn (Beuel)

August 29, 2023

CHILDREN AT WORK, IN A PERIOD OF TRANSITION. 400-1000 AD

Organized by Christian Laes (Fellow, BCDSS)

Location: Niebuhrstraße 5

September 7-8, 2023

ARCHAEOLOGIES OF DEPENDENCY IN LATIN AMERICA

Organized by Christian Mader, Claire Conrad and Tamia Viteri

Location: Bonner Universitätsforum, Heussallee 18-24

September 28, 2023

"TORI UND LOKITA" FILM SCREENING/ DISCUSSION

Joint film and discussion series by Förderverein Filmkultur Bonn and the BCDSS, depicting topics of migration, child exploitation, and discrimination faced by underage African migrants in Europe.

Location: Kino in der Brotfabrik, Kreuzstraße 16, 53225 Bonn (Beuel)

October 30, 2023

READING AND DISCUSSION WITH MAREICE KAISER

Organized by BCDSS Press and PR, in cooperation with the Adult Education Center (VHS) Bonn

Location: Adult Education Center (VHS) Bonn, Mülheimer Platz 1, Room 1.11 (Saal) - 18h start
Please register via VHS

October 30-31, 2023

INTERNATIONAL PHD SEMINAR ON SLAVERY, SERVITUDE & EXTREME DEPENDENCY

Location: Bonner Universitätsforum Heussallee 18-24

November 2-3, 2023

CONFERENCE: HOUSEHOLDS AS COERCIVE LABOR REGIMES

by BCDSS, and the International Institute of Social History.

Organized by Stephan Conermann, Karin Hofmeester, Ulbe Bosma and Matthias van Rossum

Location: International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam

November 23, 2023

"PARIS IS BURNING"

FILM SCREENING/ DISCUSSION

Joint film and discussion series by Förderverein Filmkultur Bonn and the BCDSS, depicting the transgender and Ballroom Culture in New York City in the 1980s.

Location: Kino in der Brotfabrik, Kreuzstraße 16, 53225 Bonn (Beuel)
18h start

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<https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/outreach/videos#JCML>





Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture Series

July to September 2023

july

July 3, 2023, 4:15 pm CEST, (hybrid)

Imprisonment as Historical Process: Examples from Ancient Mesopotamia

NICHOLAS REID
(Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, USA)

July 10, 2023, 4:15 pm CEST (online)

The European slave trade and regional profiles of slavery in the Early Middle Ages

ALICE RIO
(King's College London, UK)

July 17, 2023, 4:15 pm CEST (online)

The many faces of indigenous labour in Bolivian Amazonia, 1840s-1940s

ANNA GUITERAS MOMBIOLA
(Complutense University of Madrid, Spain)

July 24, 2023, 4:15 pm CEST (online)

A LIFE STORY IN THE GUAPORÉ RUBBER FIELDS: Racial relations and labour coercion in the SW Amazonian commodities frontier

LOUISE CARDOSO DE MELLO
(Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Seville, Spain and Universidade Federal Fluminense, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

september

September 4, 2023, 4:15 pm CEST (online)

"Personal service" and related coercive labor relations in the Viceroyalty of Seventeenth-Century Peru

RAQUEL GIL MONTERO
(INCHUSA CONICET, Argentina)

September 11, 2023, 4:15 pm CEST (hybrid)

"¿Que es un bracero?". Questioning dependency and desires from the perspective of Mexican contract workers.

CLAUDIA BERNARDI
(University of Perugia, Italy)

September 18, 2023, 4:15 pm CEST (online)

"Traverse of the Maribunds": the journeys of invalid ex-prisoners, released from the Gulag forced-labour camps, 1930-1953

MIKHAIL NAKHONECHNYI
(University of Helsinki, Finland)

September 25, 2023, 4:15 pm CEST (online)

The meanings of wage labor in a slave society from a gender perspective in nineteenth-century Brazil

FABIANE POPINIGIS
Rural Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRRJ), Brazil

The magazine **DEPENDENT** is published twice annually by the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) and contains information, descriptive articles and reports about its research projects and findings, as well as its publications and events. A feature article provides insights on research into areas related to strong asymmetrical dependency. The magazine is sent out by e-mail in PDF format or in print. Information on how to subscribe and future issues can be found at <http://ow.ly/BfsA50MRG5>

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¹ Federal Council the Churches of Christ in America Archives, NCC RG-18, B84-F18 (Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA);
² Abraham Lincoln, 'Second Inaugural Address' (4 March 1865);

³ Karl Marx, 'Early Writings', Livingstone and Bente, trans. (Penguin; London, 1992), 282;
⁴ Heath W. Carter, 'The Biblical Case for Organized Labor' (accessed on 12 April 2023). This is a popular article written to introduce the author's book, 'Union Made: Working People and the Rise of Social Christianity in Chicago' (Oxford, 2015);
⁵ National Council of Churches, 'The Social Creed of the Churches' (Philadelphia, December 4th, 1908);
⁶ Ibid;
⁷ World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 'Accra Confession' (Accra, 2004), 11.
⁸ Walter Rauschenbusch, 'A Theology for the Social Gospel' (Abington; Nashville, 1987), 120.
Image: Federal Council the Churches of Christ in America Archives, NCC RG-18, B84-F18 (Presbyterian Historical Society; Philadelphia)
Löhr (pp. 16-18): all images public domain | González Undurraga (pp. 23-24): Notes:
¹ Translation by Camila Soto Illanes;
² "Domestic work-affective labor: On feminization and the coloniality of labor", Women's Studies International Forum, vol.46, 2014, p. 45-53.
Image 1: Archivo Nacional Histórico de Chile (ANHCh), vol. 943, foja 123, Escribanía 1, Santiago. 1795. Image 2: ANHCh, vol. 11, foja 437v., Notarios de Santiago. 1802. | Zeuske (pp. 25-28): Notes:
¹ Ira Berlin, Philip D. Morgan, "Introduction", in: The Slaves' Economy. Independent Production by Slaves in the Americas, ed. Berlin & Morgan (London: Routledge, 2016): 1-29, 1.
² Sarmiento Ramírez, Ismael, "Vestido y calzado", in: Sarmiento Ramírez, Cuba entre la opulencia y la pobreza. Población, economía y cultura material en los primeros 68 años del siglo XIX, Madrid: Aldaba Ediciones, 2004, pp. 291-330, pp. 319, 320.
³ La Ilustración española y americana Año XVII. Núm. 22 (Madrid 8 de junio de 1873), p. 553
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Pia Wiegink (pp. 62-64) Notes:
¹ Rowland, Cameron, "Amt 45 I," Exhibition Booklet, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, 2023, p. 1. https://cms.mmk.art/site/assets/files/8342/mmk_pamphlet_cameron_rowland_screen-reader_optimized_en.pdf.
² Rowland, "Amt 45 I," p. 7.
³ See also Camp, Stephanie M.H., 'Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the

Plantation South'. University of North Carolina Press, 2005, p. 72.
Laurie Venters (pp. 78) Notes:
¹ Whether or not agricultural slaves were regularly fettered is a matter of ongoing dispute. The agronomists Cato (234-149 BCE) and Columella both allude to shackled farmhands, termed 'conpediti' and 'alligati' respectively. Likewise, Pliny the Younger (b. 61 CE) maintained he was not in the habit of keeping 'servi vinciti' (chained slaves) on his estate, suggesting other 'domini' may well have done so. See Cato, 'De Agricultura', 56; Columella, 'De re rustica', 1.9.4; Pliny, 'Epistulae', 3.19.7.
² This sign, apart from being wholly fictional, is difficult to interpret. For one, such a warning presupposes literacy, a fact that cannot be assumed for all slaves. Secondly, a hundred lashes would surely kill or severely maim even the most robust of 'servi'. Perhaps then the sign was intended to project Trimalchio's authority to incoming guests, with dissuasion from truancy being only a subsidiary objective.
³ The notion of "rival geographies" was first developed by Edward Said to encapsulate particular styles of resistance to colonial occupation. More recently, Stephanie Camp has productively leveraged Said's terminology in the context of Antebellum slavery, see "Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South" (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 7. Camp's ideas have, in turn, been gainfully applied to the Roman world, see Sandra Joshel, "Geographies of Slave Containment and Movement," in "Roman Slavery and Roman Material Culture", ed. Michele George (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 99-128.
⁴ Alfenus Varus, 'Digest', 11.3.16.
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