

# HOUSEHOLDS AS COERCIVE LABOUR REGIMES

THE BONN CENTER FOR DEPENDENCY AND SLAVERY STUDIES (BCDSS), UNIVERSITY OF BONN, GERMANY & THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL HISTORY (IISH), AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS  
**NOVEMBER 2 – 3, 2023**

hosts the Cluster of Excellence "Beyond Slavery and Freedom", which aims to overcome the binary opposition of "slavery versus freedom". We approach the phenomenon of slavery and other types of strong asymmetrical dependency from methodologically and theoretically distinct perspectives.

During the conference, we would like to concentrate our attention to larger household organizations, including the private households of the military, political and economic elites, but also, for example, plantations, private companies, haciendas and estates. All can be considered as households where the head wields extensive if not absolute power over its members. All these households represented labour regimes which were based on an asymmetrically dependent work force consisting of servants, peasants, enslaved and other coerced labourers. We will address the following issues: How do we define the household? How do people enter and exit the household? Who belongs to the household? What is the division of labour? How does it function as a unit of production and/or economic unit? What are the mechanisms of control within the household? All in all, we would like to test the idea that "household" can be developed into an analytical tool to analyse strong asymmetrical dependencies in societies.

**International Institute of Social History**  
Cruquiusweg 31,  
1019 AT Amsterdam,  
The Netherlands

## CONTACT

### Conference Organizers:

Stephan Conermann	BCDSS, University of Bonn
Karin Hofmeester	IISH
Ulbe Bosma	IISH
Matthias van Rossum	IISH

Please **register** for the conference **by October 27, 2023** via email to: [avornholz@uni-bonn.de](mailto:avornholz@uni-bonn.de)

Please visit our [workshop website](#) for more information.



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## Thursday, November 2, 2023

10:00 – 11:00 AM CET

### Introduction by Stephan Conermann

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

### Panel 1 (Chair: Ulbe Bosma)

Serving the Household: Work, Coercion and Patriarchy in Global History

**Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk**  
(Utrecht University)

The Households of the Royal and Governors' Children in Sumer and their Labour

**Vitali Bartash**  
(BCDSS, University of Bonn)

Household Coercion in Ancient Egypt: An Analysis of the Heqanakht Letters

**Honey L. Hammer**  
(BCDSS, University of Bonn)

1:00 – 2:00 PM – Lunch Break

2:00 – 4:00 PM

### Panel 2 (Chair: Matthias van Rossum)

Familia Caesaris: Economic Perspectives on the Household of the Roman Emperor as a Coercive Labour System in the Roman Economy

**Dennis Mario Beck**  
(BCDSS, University of Bonn)

**Lennart Gilhaus**  
(University of Bonn)

All in the Familia? Coerced Labour and the Monastic Household in Northern France (c. 850 – c. 1100)

**Niall Ó Súilleabháin**  
(Trinity College Dublin)

The Practice of Householding: Coerced Labour in Early-Modern Swedish Ironmaking

**Göran Rydén**  
(Uppsala University)

4:00 – 4:30 PM – Coffee Break

## Thursday, November 2, 2023

4:30 – 6:30 PM

### Panel 3 (Chair: Karin Hofmeester)

"Our Suffering this Harsh Castilian Tribute": The Changing Nature of Spanish Conquest and Colonialism on the Coerced Labor Regimes of Colonial Maya Households, 1542-1821

**John F. Chuchiak**  
(Missouri State University)

Women's Work: Featherworking and Forced Labour in Amanteca Households in Postclassic Tenochtitlan

**Rosamund Fitzmaurice**  
(University College London)

Interpret or Die: The Role of Slave Interpreters during the Spanish Conquest of the Americas

**Alaz Kanber**  
(Istanbul)

7:30 PM – Dinner  
(only for speakers and organizers)

## Friday, November 3, 2023

9:30 – 10:30 AM

### Panel 4 (Chair: Stephan Conermann)

From Loyal Servitors to Slaves on Strike: Mapping Asymmetrical Relations and their Negotiation in the Mughal Imperial Household

**Emma Kalb**  
(BCDSS, University of Bonn)

The bawi System and the Making of the Chief's Household in the Lushai Hills in North-East India

**Yaruipam Muivah**  
(École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris)

10:30 – 11:00 AM – Coffee Break

## Friday, November 3, 2023

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

### Panel 5 (Chair: John F. Chuchiak)

The Soviet Collective Farm. Boundaries of a Coercive Labour Regime (1929-1941)

**Gijs Kessler**  
(IISH, Amsterdam)

"Whose Child Are You?" Tradition and Dependency in the Yórübá Household Structure

**Boluwatife Akinro**  
(BCDSS, University of Bonn)

The Changing Faces of Domestic and Ritual Labour Assistance in Fulani Elite's Households from Central Mali

**Lotte Pelckmans**  
(Copenhagen University)

1:00 – 2:00 PM – Lunch Break

2:00 – 4:00 PM

### Group Work

4:00 – 4:30 PM – Coffee Break

4:30 – 6:00 PM

**Reports from the Groups, Wrap-up**  
(Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk)

7:00 PM – Dinner (optional)