

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BONN CENTER FOR DEPENDENCY AND SLAVERY STUDIES

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WITHOUT
SLAVES?**

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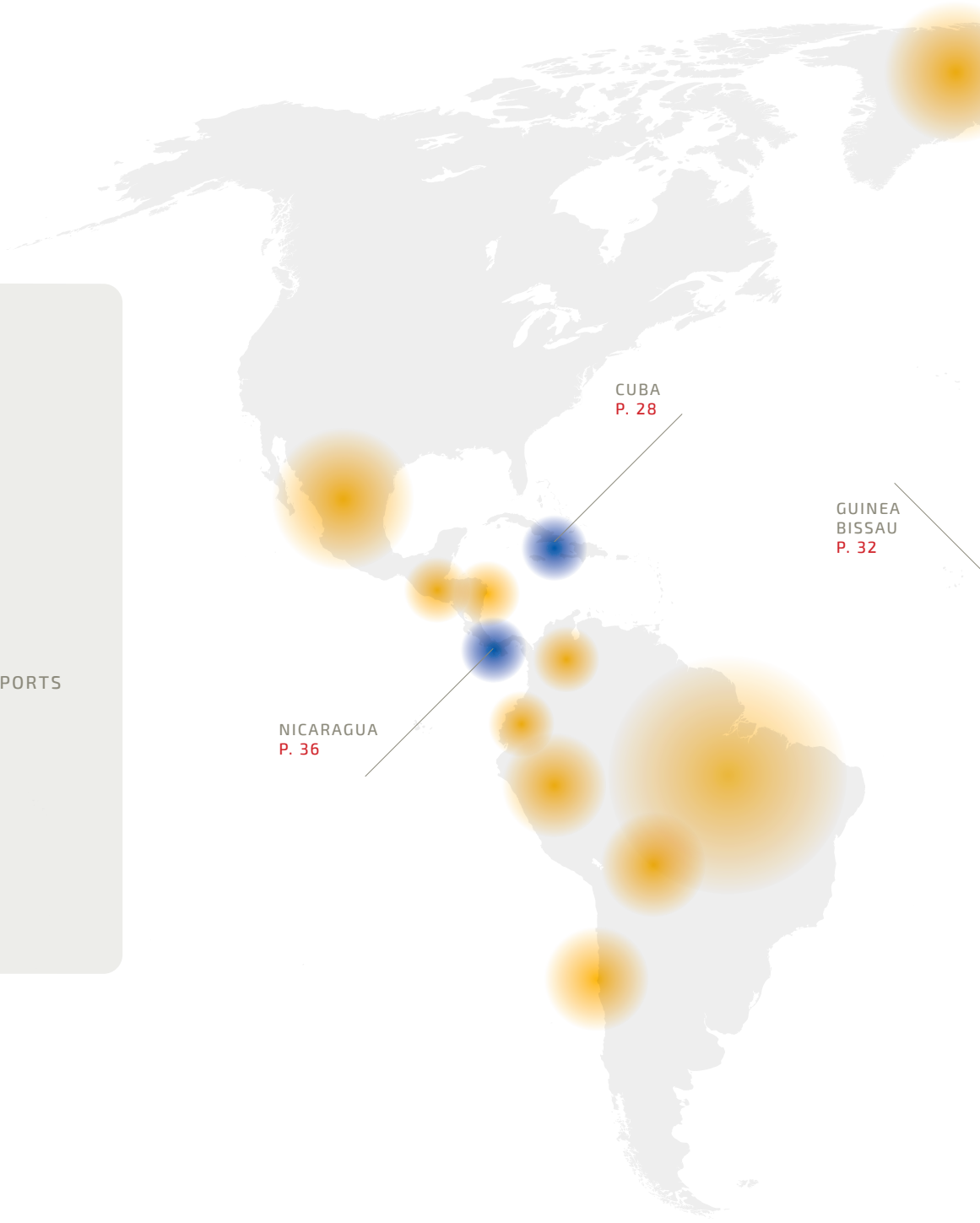
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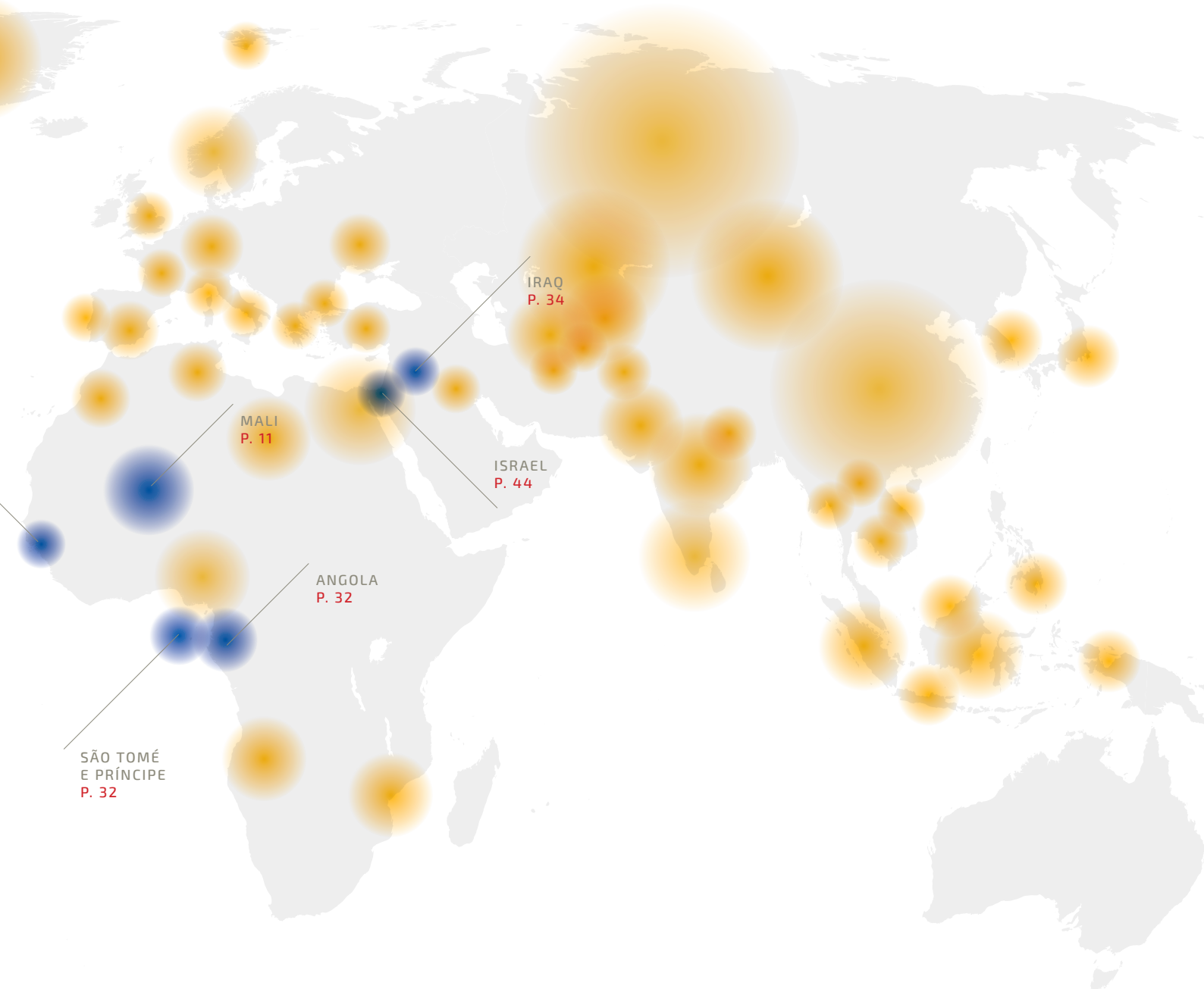
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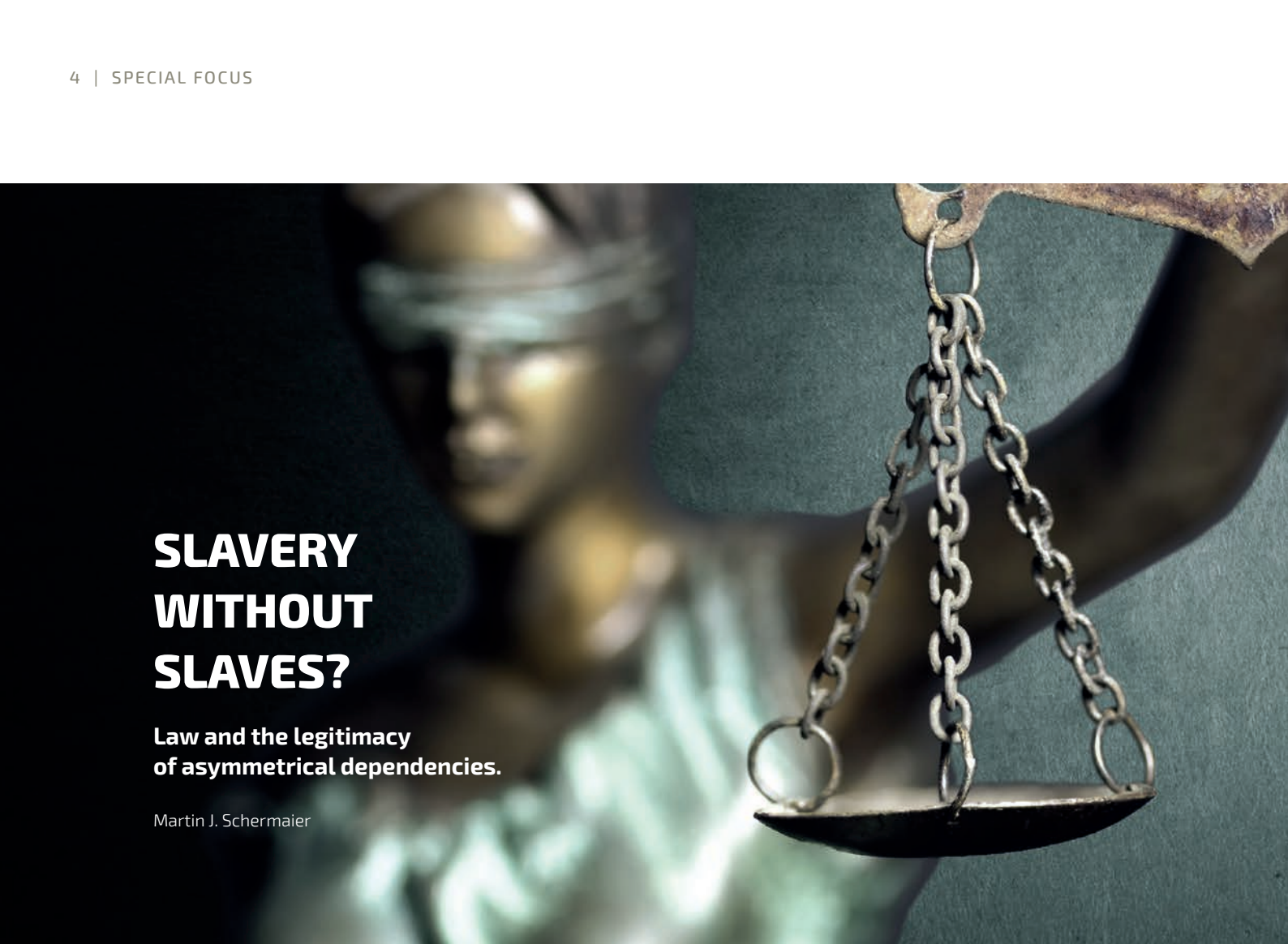
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Our research will contribute to the academic debate on numerous and varied expressions of **strong asymmetrical dependencies** from a trans-regional and deep-time perspective. We are interested in social processes in order to better understand why and how distinct forms of asymmetrical dependencies emerged in different places and periods. Our aim is to identify the factors behind their development over time. Therefore, our research looks at a diverse range of places across the world. In this magazine, we focus on the blue-colored regions; the ones marked in yellow are ongoing projects of other of the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies' scholars.



SLAVERY WITHOUT SLAVES?

**Law and the legitimacy
of asymmetrical dependencies.**

Martin J. Schermaier

Every society organizes itself into different forms of dependency, many of which are asymmetrical. They may be forms of personal dependency which exist only between particular individuals and only for a limited period of time; or they may be institutionalized forms, which assign certain roles and behaviors to certain groups of people.

WHAT IS INSTITUTIONALIZED DEPENDENCY?

The range of conceivable dependencies is large: if person A asks person B to pass the bread basket during a meal together and B complies with this request, they do so in the expectation that A would do the same if asked. Person A is aware of this expectation, and so by asking B to do something A tacitly agrees to do the same, or something similar, for B. We call this courtesy, but there is also a form of attachment here that structures the social behavior of A and B: B has done A a favor, so A knows they are beholden to B. This is nothing other than a form of personal, and at the same time situational, dependency. If B were the child or the paid domestic help of A, this mutual expectation would not exist. There would be no obligation on person A to return the favor for person B. Children and parents, domestic workers and employers are in an institutionalized form of dependency where any service rendered by one party has already been matched



THE VIEW FROM INSIDE: "INTERNAL REGULATIONS" OF DEPENDENCY

One might think that a society's internal regulations are based on how that society legitimizes its social hierarchies. In fact, research by legal historians has shown that this is often not the case. One example are legal regulations for slaves and freedmen in ancient Roman law, which in some respects resemble modern labor law down to the last detail. There are also parallels in the economy: the division of labor always follows the same pattern, in its basic structures at least: on the one hand are those who plan, set up and monitor processes; on the other, there are those who carry them out.

How exactly such hierarchies of agency are framed in law is irrelevant for the actual degree of dependency suffered by the workers. Only from our modern perspective is there a crucial difference between an employee who is the property of their employer, and an employee owing labor to them: property, for us, carries a much broader meaning than it did in antiquity. We construct employment relationships as being entered into and terminated by contract and, as such, on a voluntary basis – by doing this we largely ignore social or economic constraints. These days the global division of labor has reached a level that means we can no longer see these constraints. In European history the internal legal structure of dependency relations appears to be largely interchangeable; this is partly due to the fact that this internal structure usually follows the pattern laid down by ancient Roman law. So a shared normative heritage underpins the phenomenological similarities of dependency relations.

by a service provided by the other. Being embedded in a regular exchange relationship means that no new expectations – and so no new dependencies – arise in the case given.

“ It is the task of jurists to detect rules within institutionalized forms of dependency and to resolve conflicts between the parties. ”

Jurists have the task to detect the rules within such institutionalized forms of dependency and so to resolve conflicts between the conflicting parties. But how are dependencies institutionalized in the first place? The decisive factor is to read dependency itself as a regular occurrence, as part of the normative order. However, in the European tradition, this sort of interpretation was originally the province not of jurists, but of theologians and philosophers.

“ We construct employment relationships as being entered into and terminated by contract and, as such, on a voluntary basis – by doing this we largely ignore social or economic constraints. ”

However, most people would not equate modern working conditions with ancient slavery. What would chained galley slaves have in common with unionized workers? It's a drastic example, but even here we can find legal commonalities, such as the ability of employers to sanction non-performance. This example makes clear that a purely legalistic approach to dependency is useless. Dependencies are social phenomena; as such they are best described in sociological terms. Law merely provides the normative framework for classifying various forms of dependency and situating them within our contemporary notions

of conflict resolution. While the terms required to do this are arbitrary and subject to change, the number of legal instruments is comparatively small.

THE VIEW FROM OUTSIDE: LEGITIMIZING DEPENDENCY

While it is characteristic of institutionalized forms of dependency that they are enshrined in law, dependency is not created by law. Instead, law plays an important role on a different level, namely concerning the question which dependencies are compatible with the legal concepts of their period. So this concerns the "external" part of institutional dependency, the question of its legitimation. While legitimacy discourses seek to align with internal regulations that govern dependency relations, their aim is not to argue in favor of the legitimacy of existing inequality, but instead to justify existing regulations. The legitimation of dependency relations is not rooted in the existing order, but in prepositive notions of how an ideal society should look like.

We frequently underestimate such notions of order. One of them is the division of people into free and unfree, which originated in antiquity. It is an attractively simple classification: unfree people are slaves, while free people are not. This notion suggests that unfreedom is clearly delineated. Even modern Western societies believe that where there is no slavery, there is equality. Whether we achieve this goal depends solely on the definition of who is a slave. The narrower the definition, the sooner we have attained perfection.

OLD CERTAINTIES, NEW DOUBTS

European legal history is also marked by efforts to eliminate slavery by definition. Ancient societies took the existence of slaves for granted. Educated people could quote Aristotle on some peoples being masters by nature, while others are slaves by nature. Slavery existed in all Mediterranean societies. This fact was invoked by jurists confronted with the Stoic argument that all men are equal. Even significant differences in the social positions of individual slaves (and individual free people) did not change the division of the world into "unfree" and "free". Slaves might be treated like beasts, or they might undertake important social tasks, depending on how their masters decided to use them. A slave's lived reality was determined by their master, in a way that was largely free from legal constraints. The law only determined how a person became a slave, how they could be freed, and what role a slave might have in their master's property and with regards to third parties.

“A slave's lived reality was determined by their master, in a way that was largely free from legal constraints. The law only determined how a person became a slave, how they could be freed, and what role a slave might have in their master's property and with regards to third parties.”

From the third century onwards, this rather unambiguous world came under increasing pressure from two directions: from (a) new forms of strong asymmetrical dependency that were coming into being, and (b) Christian teachings.

a) There was a shortage of slaves in a number of different sectors, particularly in agriculture. The once abundant supply of prisoners of war, who had been sold as slaves, dried up and came to a complete standstill for several decades. New forms of dependency developed under the guise of private law, which obliged artisans and their descendants to stick to certain trades, and tied tenant farmers to their land. The resulting social classes would go on to define the social order of the Middle Ages.

b) Christian teachings hold that before God, there is no difference between free and unfree: the death of Christ redeems all believers regardless. Neither apostles nor church fathers drew social-revolutionary conclusions from this, but the ecclesiology of the early church in particular is characterized by a strong conviction that the division into free and unfree was irrelevant. Slaves could become priests and bishops, and marriages between unfree and free were valid in the eyes of God. We have reports from the Early and the High Middle Ages of churches and monasteries that freed all their slaves. Scholastic theologians accepted slavery as a reality but described it as *praeter naturam*, unwanted by God.

EUROPE'S FIG LEAF

Especially in Central and Western Europe these two tendencies led to the widespread denial of slavery. Around the year 1500 jurists claimed that slavery had ceased to exist, and a short while later the French political philosopher Jean Bodin claimed that slavery had become extinct in Western Europe by 1520. But more than a century later, in 1645, the Pomeranian lawyer David Mevius used Roman slave law to argue that serfs displaced from the lands of their masters in

the turmoil of the Thirty Years' War must return there. Here, as in all other cases of unwaged labor, slave law served as a normative framework for clarifying the legal relationship between masters and laborers.

This tension between, on the one hand, a discourse of legitimacy that denied slavery and, on the other, a practice in which slave law was applied, was sustained by social conditions and supported by regulations. By the High Middle Ages, classical slavery had come to be replaced by other forms of dependency (serfdom, feudalism, the guilds), some of which are explicitly differentiated from slavery. The leading moral authority, the Roman Church, allowed the enslavement of non-Christians, at least in those cases where they had been captured in a just war or had sold themselves. It turned a blind eye to the slave trade flourishing in the Mediterranean, in which Venice and Genoa took an active part.

“By the High Middle Ages classical slavery had come to be replaced by other forms of dependency: serfdom, feudalism, the guilds.”

History would repeat itself a few centuries later in the abolition movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: While trans-Atlantic slavery was rejected and fought against, other forms of strong asymmetrical dependency — such as serfdom, the sale of children and increasingly wage labor — were tolerated or even newly created. Anything that was not the one rejected type of dependency (which was always dubbed “slavery”) appeared legitimate. There was no teleological weighing or functional comparison of different forms of dependency, at least not in the dominant discourse.

NEW QUESTIONS

From a historical and especially from a legal-historical point of view, however, what is interesting is not only this tension between the rejection of slavery on the one hand, and the legitimization of slave-like conditions on the other. It is just as important to find out how the “internal regulations” of these conditions went on to develop. Was Roman slave law (or freedperson law) really formative for how modern labor law developed? What impact did discourses of legitimacy have on the shaping of this law? How did medieval and modern jurists legally shape forms of strong asymmetrical dependency? We still need answers to these and many other questions, and over the coming years the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies will address them.

Quotes

Gaii Institutiones 1.9: Et quidem summa divisio de iure personarum haec est, quod omnes homines aut liberi sunt aut servi
“The principal division of the law of persons is the following, namely, that all men are either free or slaves.”

Domitius Ulpianus 50.17.32: Quod attinet ad ius civile, servi pro nullis habentur: non tamen et iure naturali, quia, quod ad ius naturale attinet, omnes homines aequales sunt.
“As far as civil law is concerned, slaves are not regarded as persons; but this is different according to natural law, because as far as natural law is concerned, all men are equal.”

C. 29 qu. 2 c. 1 (Pope Julian I, † 352): Omnibus nobis unus pater est in coelis, et unusquisque, dives et pauper, liber et servus, equaliter pro se et pro animabus eorum rationem reddituri sunt.
“We all have one father in heaven, and each one, whether rich or poor, free or slave, must answer equally for himself and for the souls of others.”



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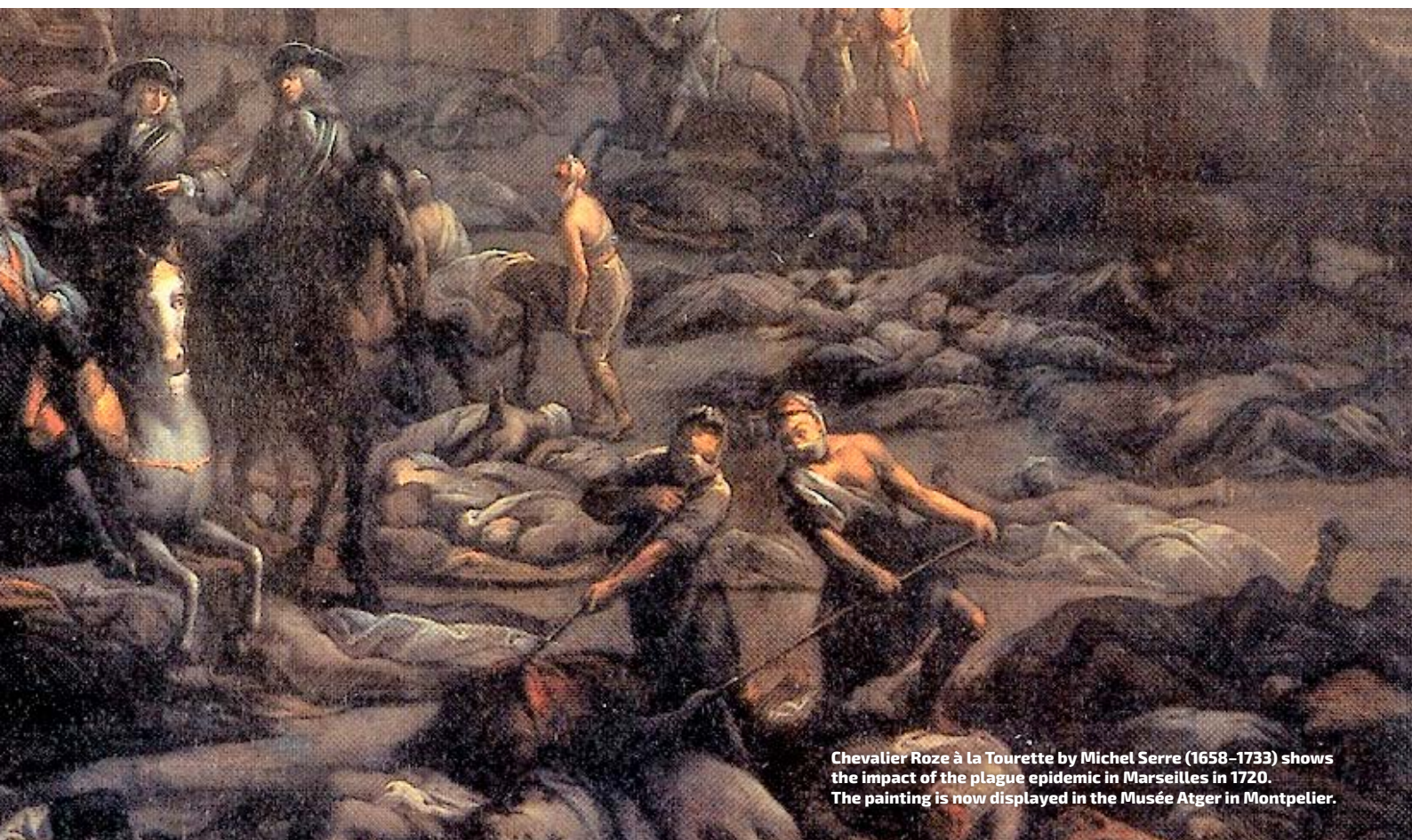
ON THE POLITICAL DIMENSION OF QUARANTINE: A LOOK BACK

Lisa Hellman

The history of quarantine is a history of power and xenophobia. These reflections by Lisa Hellman, a researcher at the Cluster of Excellence “Beyond Slavery and Freedom” at the University of Bonn, were published in the *Lebenszeichen* (“signs of life”) series on the university’s website. Contributions to this series were written under the impression of the measures imposed to control the corona virus pandemic by members of the university.

This situation we are currently in is exceptional, unprecedented. And yet we have seen it all before: in black and white images from the Spanish Flu; or, in a museum case somewhere, those suits like creepy penguins worn by plague doctors. Both are testament to human ingenuity in trying to protect ourselves against disease. But a look back into history also shows those who were made to pay the price in such exceptional times.

There are various explanations for why a quarantine should last forty days. Some point to Hippocrates’ theories about forty days as a tipping point for disease. Others look to the Bible: when God flooded the earth, he made it rain for forty days and forty nights. Jesus spent forty days fasting in the wilderness. All we know for certain is that in Europe, the concept of separating the sick from the healthy goes back to antiquity. But theories about epidemics exist outside of Europe as well. Ancient Chinese records from about 1000 BC onwards, for example, documented outbreaks of the plague as well as different quarantine



Chevalier Roze à la Tourette by Michel Serre (1658–1733) shows the impact of the plague epidemic in Marseilles in 1720. The painting is now displayed in the Musée Atger in Montpellier.

practices. So we have records going back thousands of years about isolating patients, as well as about observing and healing them.

“ In Europe, the concept of separating the sick from the healthy goes back to antiquity. ”

The term “quarantine” reflects an interconnected world from the start. It was first used in medieval Venice. Faced with the Black Death, the leaders of the trading hub authorized a committee to detain ships, cargoes and individuals in the Venice lagoon for up to forty days. Over the course of time these *quaranta giorni* turned into a *quarantinaro*. Eventually the period of isolation was reduced to thirty days – a *trentinario* – but the original name stuck.

As a matter of fact, much of what we know about practices of quarantine and beliefs about infectious diseases in the past comes from disease outbreaks, not least the fourteenth-century outbreak of the Black Death. That is a little ironic, because even after almost seven centuries of research, there is still disagreement about fundamental questions: What

exactly was the plague? Where did it rage? And just how many people did it kill? Estimates on mortality vary wildly, between five and sixty percent of the global population – a huge difference. But there is one thing we can learn from measures taken against the plague: then as now, the struggle against infection was a constant balancing act between economic losses, human contact and the fear of death.

THE HISTORY OF QUARANTINE IS A HISTORY OF POWER AND XENOPHOBIA

For centuries, quarantine has been both a medical and a political practice; as such, it sheds light on the crucial role of race and class. As I write, it has emerged in New York that African Americans are much harder hit both economically and medically by the corona virus than the White population. This is not a surprise. Historically, minorities and the poor have repeatedly been hardest hit by epidemics – and blamed for spreading them.

So the history of quarantine is not only a story about medical and scientific progress, but also about power. Quarantine hospitals in Venice like the *lazzaretto* on the island of Santa Maria di Nazareth – today's

Lazzaretto Vecchio – looked after new arrivals. But they also served to isolate locals who had fallen ill with the plague from the healthy. More such hospitals came into being over time, but the practices they employed varied. One was built in Philadelphia in 1799 after a yellow fever epidemic: but in order to protect European colonists, not to look after the health of the enslaved. Its purpose was to ensure the economic sustainability of the slave trade from an epidemiological perspective.

Over time, calls for quarantine became increasingly intertwined with xenophobia. In 1892, ships carrying Russian Jewish immigrants arrived at Ellis Island. Some of the passengers were sick with typhoid and cholera. Soon, there was an outbreak of anti-Semitism. Even the front page of the *New York Times* proclaimed, "We don't need this kind of riff-raff on our shores." Around 1900, Chinese residents of San Francisco were targeted. Fearing an outbreak of bubonic plague, the city authorities completely quarantined a 12-square-block section of Chinatown for several days, causing many Chinese laborers to lose their jobs. This led to fierce public discussions about whether to mass-deport Chinese citizens.

In a similar way, quarantine regulations were used to restrict African Americans. Early in the nineteenth century many southern states of the United States passed so-called Negro Seamen Acts, which banned Black sailors from disembarking from their ships, stigmatizing them as "dangerous outsiders". Their presence, it was argued, would cause "outside agitation" in the slave regions of the South. Any form of racial unrest and slave revolt was attributed to their "moral contagion". The fact that these Negro Seamen Acts were also referred to as "quarantines" illustrates the extent to which notions of contagion can go far beyond purely physical disease.

There can also be a gender-specific dynamic to ideas about infection and measures of isolation. In eighteenth-century Great Britain, ports represented the nation's strength, symbolizing maritime power as well as economic prosperity. On the other hand, a port could be a place of weakness, making England vulnerable to disease. The movements of sailors were regarded as a threat to the nation's collective health, which is why there were demands to quarantine both sailors themselves and the women with whom they interacted. Fear of the transmissibility of plague and syphilis led to tensions along class lines. It was alleged that relationships with sex workers contaminated the otherwise pure domestic sphere with "vile diseases", endangering the welfare and future of the nation.

So-called "camp girls" were similarly stigmatized in the United States during the First World War. As more and more US soldiers suffered from venereal disease, it was the women ("girls") who were given the blame. They had to undergo compulsory venereal disease tests and were imprisoned in droves, because it was women were seen as a serious threat to success in war. More than 30,000 sex workers were imprisoned in the U.S. even after they had been found to be free of disease.

“ Quarantine has always been a political issue, and still is today. In most cases it served to isolate particular sections of society. ”

All of these stories show that quarantine has always been a political issue, and still is today. In most cases it served to isolate particular sections of society – fortunately, this is no longer the case. But this is precisely why we must never stop to ask these fundamental questions: who can be quarantined, who must be quarantined? Who requires protection, and who may be left without protection? Whose movement may be restricted and at what cost? Is cross-border travel a threat or an opportunity? If these questions are not regularly reassessed, the answers adapted accordingly, the most fundamental values of our society will suffer. Infectious diseases, and pandemics in particular, put any society under enormous pressure. The way we act in these situations not only reveals a society's values and resources: it also lays bare the cracks and inequalities deep within its social fabric.



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is leader of the Research Group "Coerced Circulation of Knowledge" at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies. She works in the intersection between social,

cultural, maritime and global history, with a special interest in gender. In the last years, her research has led her to pay increased attention to diplomatic history and the history of science. In her current project, she follows eighteenth century prisoners of war in Siberia and North Asia. The core question driving Lisa is how intercultural interaction changed the lives of the men and women involved.



As a visiting Heinz Heinen Fellow at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, I proposed to work with the discursive displacements of the language of slavery in both colonial and contemporary West African settings. To that end, I investigated the use of slavery-related vocabularies in court cases. In this piece, I explain and discuss how it is possible that more than a century after the formal abolition of slavery by French colonial officers, court cases related to so-called “descent-based slavery” are to be found in 2020, with a special focus on Mali.

BREAKING THE SILENCE? THE ONGOING LEGACIES OF INTERNAL AFRICAN SLAVERY IN MALI

Lotte Pelckmans

From 2017, social media platforms linked to *Soninke* communities in West Mali all of a sudden abounded with horrible images of people being beaten, mothers and children with bleeding eyes, heads and bellies; old and young people chased from their houses, or locked up for several days naked in their houses; people tied up with ropes and beaten over a stone, the destruction of goods and gardens. The online debates mentioned pro- and anti-slavery groups and accused each other of being part of one or the other. The victims, the large majority of which are illiterate, deposited claims with the police and some cases went to court, thanks to help of anti-slavery activists as well as family and friends in the very large diaspora.

How, after decades of public silence on slavery, can we explain this sudden outbreak of violence directly mentioning “slavery” issues from 2017 to date? Many people believe that this issue should remain hidden

and not be talked about, but others are revolting and calling for change, by trying to lift the silence and the taboos. This generates intense friction and tension, which sometimes results in violence. Our newly funded project on the protracted rural displacements of people with slave descent aims to answer this friction in more depth in the future. I present here three non-exhaustive and rather preliminary explanations:

- first, the quest for honor and the respecting of silence;
- second, interregional protests by groups with slave status and
- third, strong out-migration which affects the economy but not so much the ideas people have about social status which involves several socially acceptable forms of exclusion and inequality.

The common thread that runs through this text is the case of only one among several activists who started breaking the silence. While privileging his story and voice, I am aware of many more people affected by and active in this issue in very different ways.

HONOR AND RESPECTING ONE'S PLACE

My first explanation for the current frictions is that, while social hierarchies inherited from the internal African slave past continue to be alive in almost every ethnic group in Mali, they are surrounded by silence and strong taboos on problematizing the inequalities and discriminations linked to them. Honorability is strongly related to restraint and avoiding all forms of public display of dissent and emotion.

“Strong taboos on social change continue to operate in the moral economy of many Soninke communities.”

Everyone should “*know his/her head*” and respect their place in society. A person is born into a certain social group with rights and obligations and this should not be questioned. Knowing how to keep silent on these issues is part of earning respectability, and compliance with social norms and regulations is highly valued. Denouncing injustices related to one's social status in the social hierarchy is “*like taking down the pants of one's father*”, according to a local saying: it insults the family and its ancestors. Thus

strong taboos on social change continue to operate in the moral economy of many *Soninke* communities, also in the provinces of Diema and Nioro (see map below), where the violence started in 2017.



WEST AFRICAN ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENTS

My second explanation is linked to regional anti-slavery activism. Nioro and Diema provinces are very close to south-east Mauritania, and historically cross-border interactions are common. On local radio, Malians learn about the successes scored by the *Initiative pour la Resurgence du mouvement Abolitioniste* (Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist movement IRA) Mauritania; an anti-slavery movement headed by a charismatic leader called Biram who denounces the use of religious arguments to discriminate against people with slave status.

Despite his frequent imprisonment, Biram entered national politics as an opposition MP and ran as presidential candidate in 2019. He is popular, mainly among urban young people of slave descent in Mauritania. Ahmet Coulibaly (*infra*) says IRA-Mauritania inspired him to become an anti-slavery activist himself in Mali. Apart from IRA, there are several other anti-slavery movements and organizations in neighboring Senegal, Niger and Mali which have become more visible over the past decades. I have analyzed the emergence of several of these movements in the past.

SPATIAL VERSUS SOCIAL MOBILITY

Thirdly, Mali's Kayes region, and especially the *Soninke* groups living there, have known a very strong out-migration since the colonial heyday, initially mainly to Senegal, the Ivory Coast and Central Africa; and from the 1970s onwards mostly to France, and more recently also to southern Africa as well as Dubai, China, and other Asian destinations. This out-migration is very marked, and in many villages this means that whole households are entirely made up of women, children and the elderly and depend on remittances sent by men living abroad.

“Most freeborn groups in Mali continue to have the monopoly over economic, political and religious resources. However, migration and trade have brought economic gain to other status groups as well, including those of slave descent.”

Although these strong diasporic tendencies and pronounced spatial mobilities did not necessarily result in social mobility within traditional hierarchies, it did mean that economic success was no longer the privilege of groups with freeborn status. While most freeborn groups in Mali continue to have the monopoly over economic, political and religious resources, migration and trade have brought economic gain to other status groups as well, including those of slave descent. I met one of them, Ahmet Coulibaly, in December 2018 in exile in the capital city of Bamako. Ahmet has three wives and invested his trading fortunes in a two-story brick house in his home village in the Diema region. Being totally illiterate himself, he wants to translate his economic success into emancipation and better chances for social climbing for his children through schooling. However, due to their slave status, and maybe also due to jealousies about their father's economic success, his children are systematically discriminated against. Bright and successful children of slave descent often face bullying or insults from freeborn children in Mali. They may be ordered to bring water or to give up their chair and sit lowly on the floor – thus being “put in their place”.

TRANSNATIONAL SPACES OF MORALITY

Spatial movements out of the home communities have thus not necessarily meant that people have changed their ideologies about social order, inequality and hierarchy. Indeed, the moral spaces of the Soninke community have been strongly guarded and were strongly reproduced in the diaspora. Whether living

in Paris or in Mali, and whether first, second or third generation immigrant, (the families of) those who try to cross the invisible lines of the hierarchy (e.g. marrying into the “wrong” status group), are more often than not severely punished through – transnationally imposed – “embargoes”.

Such embargoes are used as an effective means of punishment: the embargoed person or even his family back home, are no longer allowed to access vital elements of the village community: they cannot visit the market, fetch water, pray in the mosque, attend village meetings, and so on. In the long term, this means it is impossible to survive and it has resulted in some people being forced to move out of their communities and settle elsewhere. It is these protracted forms of displacement over the span of more than a century after the official abolition of internal slavery, which our new project will study up close.

THE QUEST FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Ahmet Coulibaly had spent most of his life outside of Mali trading goods in Asia and the Gulf countries, before he decided to return and settle at home in 2017. He was surprised by how status related inequalities in his community seemed to have become stronger rather than weaker. He witnessed how people of slave descent were not only exploited by local freeborn groups, but relates that they were also the primary victims of raids by cross-border terrorist groups, who are destabilizing large parts of the Sahel.

For the sake of his children's future and inspired by IRA-Mauritania, Ahmet decided to denounce and speak out about the discrimination against his status group: those presumably descended from slaves. In fact, he insists – as many others do – that his parents have never been “enslaved” as such, but rather, that they had been absorbed into the category of people with slave status, because in the past they had migrated from one region to another. In order to get access to marriage and land, they had to accept incorporation through absorption into the group of former slaves of the local Soninke villages they wanted to settle in.

“In Mali, the status as newcomers, outsiders or strangers can create an association with those who used to be slaves in the past, and which has now come to define people as part of the “descendants of slaves” of the local community.”

So it was their status as newcomers, outsiders or strangers that created their association with those who used to be slaves in the past, and which has now come to define them as part of the "descendants of slaves" of the local community. This means they are also anachronistically called slaves and – depending on their location – are expected to provide virtually unpaid labor on ritual occasions, as well as part of their incomes and/or remittances for the support and benefit of "freeborn" groups. Over time, these injustices have not been addressed and Malian journalist Diallo qualified this silent social conflict as a "ticking time bomb".

BREAKING THE SILENCE THROUGH WHATSAPP

Ahmet, who is relatively rich but fully illiterate, started denouncing the worst forms of exploitation against his group, including the systematic abuse of married women with ascribed slave status, by people considered of "freeborn status", thereby breaking the silence and social taboos surrounding both social (slave) status and sexual interactions. His platform: WhatsApp voice messages and radio. His messages were strongly contested and considered shocking by many, but nevertheless inspired some people with ascribed slave status to address local politicians, asking them to stop worse forms of discrimination, such as calling them by the anachronistic and pejorative word *kome* ("slave" in the *Soninke* language). In some communities this was granted.

However, in several other places, for the so-called "freeborn groups", who have already seen their economic power and privileges dwindling strongly over the past decades, this was one step too many on the road of changing power relations. In some localities (e.g. Kingui) a special unit of youngsters considered of freeborn status was installed to "guard" traditions and put the so-called "terrorist anti-slavery rebels" in their place, even if this meant using violence. And violence there was.

In 2018, the *Rassemblement Malien pour la Fraternité et le Progrès* (RMFP, "Malian Association for Brotherhood and Progress"), an association based in Paris which fights against historical injustices in *Soninke* communities, wrote a memorandum in which at least 26 cases of persecution have been described, documented with videos and photos and reported to the police. Since the police often chose side with the "freeborn" political elites, some of these cases were taken to the local courts thanks to the financial help of family members in the diaspora.

SOCIAL MEDIA VERSUS COURT LANGUAGE

Even though the courts are supposed to be neutral actors, they are in fact not. In a society where social hierarchies are not considered problematic and inequality is part of everyday social organization, judges also operate on the ideology that people of slave status are of lesser value and have lesser rights. On top of that, they can usually not pay (enough). This rigid status structure is so deeply entrenched in the society that even people in high positions who try to denounce such discriminations risk being judged for violating tradition. Slave status has been declared officially inexistent in the region since the abolition of slavery by external colonial forces in 1905, but it has in actual practice been maintained and confirmed in daily interactions. A long history of debates over social status in religious ideologies and Islamic legislative practice has been actively mobilized by different groups to either validate or nuance contemporary inequalities based on social status.

The court cases are now part of the struggle between pro and contra slavery or "historical freeborn" versus "slave" groups. Both groups (those with "freeborn" versus those with "slave" status) have been gathering money among their respective diaspora members in order to bribe the judges and win the court cases. Paris-based informants have told me that even communal village savings, made by all the active male members of the village (both "freeborn" and of "slave" descent), had been confiscated by the "freeborn" to bribe judges to their advantage. No court case so far has been won by those with ascribed slave status.

POLARIZATION AND LEXICONS OF SLAVERY

While on social media the language of slavery is very commonly used, with self-declared pro- and anti-slavery groups, in Malian courts use of the vocabulary of slavery/servility is prohibited by law. Following the abolition of both the slave trade and the internal African slave trade in French colonies in 1905, slavery was supposed to be over and therefore mentioning the social status of a person (slave/master) has become officially impossible with time. This means that the social issues of stigma, legacies and discrimination based on the slave past are not only difficult, but officially illegal. Nevertheless, in some of the 2018 court documents, the word "*maîtres*" (masters) is openly used, while for the group of people with slave status, the description "*plaintiffs who [...] are restrained by circumstances of their attaining a lower social status*" is used.

“ **The social issues of stigma, legacies and discrimination based on the slave past are not only difficult, but officially illegal. Nevertheless, in some court documents, the word *maîtres* (masters) is openly used.** ”

Secondly, people who are illiterate are usually not the principal actors in court: they need mediators, and these mediators choose sides and have their own interests. The moral taboo on discussing the legacies of slavery is a societal one, which is translated into an institutional silence of the courts. As a result, there is a “glass ceiling” of access for the victims. As long as there is no national law in the penal code legally criminalizing the ongoing discrimination based on internal legacies of slavery (such laws have been adopted in neighboring Niger and Mauritania), judging the worst excesses of asymmetrical dependencies will remain very difficult.

As long as such legal protections are not in place, Ahmet and some of his family members are in exile and dare not to put one foot outside of the compound hosting them in the capital city of Bamako, for fear of being recognized by a *Soninke* person. They can only envisage a return to their home village, where much of their possessions have been destroyed, if legal reform can back up their return from exile.



Dr. Lotte Pelckmans

is an anthropologist, interested in the cross-roads between Migration and Slavery Studies. She has been trained at Leiden (NL) University and has

been working in Dutch, French, German and Danish Academia. Her work focuses on rights and the intersecting social and spatial mobilities of people with slave status, conflict and social media, as well as Anti-Slavery Movements in West Africa and the West African diaspora. Her work has been published in *Politique Africaine*, *Journal of African History*, *Revue Européenne des migrations*, and others.

Based at the Centre for Advanced Migration Studies at Copenhagen University (DK), she is currently associate professor and working on two research projects, one focusing on court cases, literatures and narratives of contemporary slavery in Ghana (, the other one dealing with the long history of protracted (invisible) displacements related to (legacies of) descent-based slavery in Mali ([slaveryforcedmigration.org](https://tinyurl.com/LPelckmans)).

Links

<https://tinyurl.com/LottePelckmans>

<https://tinyurl.com/LPelckmans>

E-Mail: pelckmans@hum.ku.dk

INTERVIEW: “OUR MOTIVES FOR A RESEARCH STAY IN GERMANY”

In our interview, Heinz Heinen Fellows **STEFAN BRINK** and **CAROLINE LASKE** and guest researcher and Capes-Humboldt Research Fellow **PAULO CRUZ TERRA** explain their motives for a research stay in Germany, classify the research agenda of our Cluster of Excellence, and evaluate their work during the corona virus crisis.

You have been Fellows or Guest Researchers at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) since October. What motivated you to apply for – generally speaking – doing research in Germany?

Paulo Cruz Terra:

What is attractive in Germany is the massive investment in academia, and more specifically in the humanities, compared to other countries. The Cluster of Excellence “Beyond Slavery and Freedom” is a concrete example of what could represent an actual policy in terms of research since it supports innovative initiatives.

Stefan Brink:

I was not aware of the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies and its research profile, but was informed by a Bonn colleague of the call, and it was recommended to me that I apply, since I have been working on Early Scandinavian slavery for the last 25 years.

How does research in Germany differ from research in your home countries? Is there a difference?

Stefan Brink:

Well, it depends on where this academic research is taking place. The normality, in the humanities, at e.g. a UK University, is that your research

is an individual task, and since the teaching and supervision burden is so heavy there, you do your research either during a sabbatical, or, more commonly, you apply for some scholarship, fellowship or external funding to buy some time for one to three years. The research environment at UK universities is not focused on seminars or workshops, instead daily life is totally focused on undergraduate teaching

In Scandinavia you should ideally have time to do research in your academic position, especially if you are a Professor. But it is also very common to apply for a research project (especially in Sweden), where you are in a team and in that team you can devote normally two to three years to research on a specific topic, which can be disseminated in articles, conference volumes or a collection of articles in an edited volume. You are advised that trying to get articles into prestigious journals is very important.

The US system looks very much like the UK one, with a nearly total focus on undergraduate teaching. However, in the US there are several “Research Centers”, Institutes of Advanced Studies, at the major universities. My experience is from the Institute of Advanced Studies, Princeton, which is considered to be one of the most important IAS in the world. The idea at IAS, Princeton,

is to have four strands of research, the largest and most famous is Mathematics, of course, due to the long-time member Albert Einstein. I was attached to the History team. We all got an office of our own, fully equipped. We were told we had no obligation other than to do our research and all the staff were there to help us achieve that. Twice a week there were voluntary seminars, of which one was more of a lecture, or informing of your research during a “working lunch” with some questions afterwards. The other smaller seminar, with a topic-focused group, was more of a workshop, with a presentation of a topic or problem or a text, and then an hour plus intensive discussion, chaired by a very knowledgeable scholar. These seminars were extremely fruitful and productive occasions, and ought to be a role model for every IAS.

As for Germany, I am not required to visit a weekly Higher Seminar (maybe I am misled here), however I have attended seminars focused on the PhD students with staff attending. As for the BCDSS, I think the IAS, Princeton, model could be very useful to adopt.

Caroline Laske:

Germany has an excellent reputation for encouraging, valuing and funding fundamental research. As research budgets are being cut everywhere, the first area that

tends to be affected is fundamental research. Germany appears not to go down that short-sighted avenue.

Paulo Cruz Terra:

The substantial difference between Brazil and Germany in terms of research is the investment and importance given to research by the different governments. In Brazil, we are witnessing a considerable decrease in terms of public investment in research, and there is also not much private support there. The actual government is downgrading the importance of science in general, and frontally attacking the humanities – for example there was no funding for humanities subjects in the last public research programs. Besides that, there are constant attempts to constrain researchers' freedom, like the project to limit the authorization to leave the country to participate in academic events. Authoritarian initiatives that target research are on the increase in Brazil.

“ *Authoritarian initiatives targeting research are on the increase in my home country, Brazil. However, despite all precariousness, many Brazilian researchers are resilient and creative.* **”**

Another important distinction is in the university structures. In Brazil, there are significant regional discrepancies between public universities, and some of them are incredibly precarious in terms of working conditions. At the first university that I worked, for example, the classroom was a container. Despite all precariousness, many Brazilian researchers are resilient and creative, and in areas like slavery studies, the country has an important role to play.

In your opinion, how does the research agenda of the BCDSS fit into the current trends in dependency and slavery research? Is it complementary or does it extend the research framework?

Paulo Cruz Terra:

The research agenda of the BCDSS contributes to improving a current tendency in my field of study, Labor History, which is moving beyond the dichotomy of “slavery” and “freedom”. Actually, the BCDSS extends it by proposing the key concept of “strong asymmetrical dependency”. This concept helps, for example, to rethink the analysis of different labor relations – like convict and tributary labor, serfdom, etc. – in terms of investigating the connections and comparisons among them. The research agenda of the BCDSS also extends the current tendency by including a diverse range of spaces and temporalities. It seems that the BCDSS will be, soon, a reference on Labor History studies and a crucial space of research in this field.

Stefan Brink:

In my opinion the BCDSS has the potential to be a, if not THE, leading research center, depending on how the structure could be. At the moment my impression is the focus is on the four Research Groups with PhD students, writing their dissertations. Then there is a lecture series with invited speakers, informing us of ongoing research in the field. The construction differs, hence, from many other Institutes of Advanced Studies, probably depending on requisites stipulated in the Grant.

If this two-sided construction shows to be useful and fruitful, maybe a second step could be to develop the non-PhD side of the BCDSS to a world-leading research center, with invited fellows and affiliated Bonn academics with focused research groups and frequent internal workshops.

Do you consider dependency and slavery studies to be fundamental and important for understanding contemporary societies? And if so, why?

Stefan Brink:

Absolutely, since “asymmetrical dependencies” are to be found in any society, now and in the past. Studies of what is happening today are vital for a society that sees huge migrations, which will affect many societies fundamentally, creating social tension, trafficking, changes in workforce, begging, changing minimum wage rules, growth of a “precariat”, large groups of people never integrated into society. All such things may lead to new and problematic asymmetrical dependency structures in societies, especially in western welfare states, which “must” be rather “static” to function. And to face such changes, we need to better understand such societal trends by studying the past, wherefore historical studies are as vital as contemporary ones.

Caroline Laske:

The research agenda of the BCDSS is highly interesting and very topical. It has found a hitherto unoccupied niche of extending slavery studies, not only beyond the transatlantic slavery trade phenomenon but also to include other forms of dependencies, which highlight that slavery is a continuum that cannot necessarily be stowed away in a particular box. In the innovative nature of this approach lies a very high potential for becoming a world leading research center that puts slavery in a larger context.

“ *The BCDSS has found an unoccupied niche of extending slavery studies, not only beyond the transatlantic slavery trade phenomenon but also to include other forms of dependencies, which highlight that slavery is a continuum that cannot necessarily be stowed away in a particular box.* **”**

Paulo Cruz Terra:

The current tendency of not only privileging wage labor is essential to emphasize the presence and interaction of multiple labor relations in contemporary societies. Contemporary slavery, for example, is a reality in many countries, including Brazil. At the same time, by avoiding the dichotomy “slavery” and “freedom”, it is possible to analyze the various degrees of coercion present in current labor relations, including wage labor. All this is crucial to understanding the precariousness present in the worlds of labor today, and has political importance in helping to denounce and fight against it.

What are your main areas of research, and how do your projects fit into the BCDSS research agenda?

Caroline Laske:

My research lies at the intersection of law, history and language, applying linguistic analysis to the study of legal history and legal concepts, comparative law and translation. I research the linguistic expression of normative concepts and the continuous interaction between the way (customary) laws create meaning in language and how the normative power of language creates realities in (customary) laws.

This project I work on while at the BCDSS contributes to decoding asymmetrical dependencies by studying the legal status and legal capacity of secular women in late medieval England, Normandy, Flanders and Saxony. The lack of legal capacity was the quintessential expression of their inferior position of dependency in society and in the eyes of the law. This is particularly poignant in relation to the capacity to hold land, to dispose of property, to run a business, appear in a court of law etc., even if only on a temporary basis while their menfolk were away on crusades, tied up with feudal duties or fighting wars. In fact, married women frequently represented the family unit and were engaged in public business, either on their own behalf and in their own name or on behalf of absent spouses.

The research aims to reveal the extent of that legal dependency in real, rhetorical and linguistic terms. It involves examining the textual and semantic representation of women in legal, quasi-legal and customary law texts, as well as in reports of (legal) disputes and private documents such as wills, by using diachronic linguistics and terminological methodologies. This allows us to go beyond content analysis and get a better understanding of the actual social experience of women's legal capacity by compounding information and data from analysis of content, meanings, terminology and discourse and, hence, providing a contextualized understanding of the dependencies in which women existed in their daily lives.

Paulo Cruz Terra:

My research closely connects to the Research Group “Punishment, Labor, Dependency” as it addresses one of its issues, i.e. on the one hand where exactly to pinpoint punishment and labor at the intersection of gender, class, ethnicity, race and age, and on the other to determine how punishment and labor contribute to the making of those categories.

Furthermore, the research is also related to the Research Group “Law and the Creation of Dependency in the Ibero-Atlantic”. This research group devotes special attention to a crucial point of my research, which is the process of reforms that normative orders underwent during the long nineteenth century, and how these reforms impacted on the construction of asymmetrical structures of group dependencies.

My work analyzes how legislation, punishment and anti-vagrancy policies entangled with multiple labor relations during the process of the abolition of slavery. It centers on the period 1850–1910 and addresses the Lusophone world, with particular foci in Brazil – which was part of the Portuguese Empire until 1822 – and two of the most important colonies of the Portuguese Empire in Africa during this time frame: Mozambique and Angola. Consulting the legislation, and the debates connected to it, I intend to investigate how the idea of vagrancy, and the punishment for it, shaped the implementation of new labor relations, and their regulations, after the abolition, which were permeated by definitions of class, gender, race and age.

Stefan Brink:

I am studying the kind of slavery, dependencies and type of patronage found in early Scandinavian society (pre c. 1300). The period in question is one of the most expansive and turbulent in Scandinavian history, with state formations, the Viking phenomenon, the emerging towns and a proto-urbanization, the monetarization, the change of religion, the establishment of the Church, the introduction of a “feudal” system and so on. The question is, how did slavery function, what did the social fabric look like, what kind of dependencies are we aware of and how repressive were they, how did society change with the introduction of Christianity and the church organization, how did legal statutes change with changing societal

roles? My research, as I see it, is at the core of the proclaimed research objectives of BCDSS, analyzing asymmetrical dependencies, such as patronage, slavery, gender roles, even kingship.

How will you prepare and make your research accessible after your time at the BCDSS?

Paulo Cruz Terra:

This specific research project started last year, and it will finish in February 2022. My plan is to publicize the results in academic journals, events and a final book by that date. But it is also of crucial importance to me to make the research accessible to a wider audience. My intention is to organize a specific webpage to publicize part of the data and results of the research. Another essential objective is to produce a short movie with the outcome.

Caroline Laske:

During my six months at the BCDSS, I have studied the textual and semantic representation of women in the thirteenth-century manuscript *Le Très Ancien Coutumier de Normandie*. The write-up of that study is ready and I hope it will be published in the BCDSS publication series before the end of this year. I am also planning a second paper studying other sources before the end of my fellowship.

Stefan Brink:

The research I have done during the autumn, winter and early spring, namely to finalize a book *Thralldom. A History of Slavery in the Viking Age* has been in production with Oxford University Press since early April, for publication in late autumn. I am at the moment working with the earliest Scandinavian laws, analyzing social dependencies, and will disseminate this research in one or a couple of articles.

After almost six months: How do you assess the opportunities offered to you in Bonn and at the BCDSS?

Stefan Brink:

I am most grateful for the opportunity to join BCDSS, and the time spent in Bonn has been very rewarding and fruitful. I am of the opinion that the BCDSS has the potential to be a leading research institution in the field. I must also add how much I appreciate the help I have got from the admin staff, Jan and Astrid. They have been absolutely brilliant.

Paulo Cruz Terra:

One of the greatest opportunities offered by the BCDSS is the intensive exchange in multiple aspects. Exchange in terms of making it possible to discuss my research with people from different academic backgrounds and diverse parts of the world. Exchange also in the chance of debating academic works that address various temporalities and spaces, which gave me a chance enhance my work. The BCDSS also enables professional exchange. I could make new contacts and be involved in the organization of academic events, like the one about slavery in Brazil, another one concerned with punishment and labor, and finally a movie festival. It also provides contacts that go beyond the BCDSS, which generates partnerships for events and publications. It is clear to me that the time at the BCDSS is already a turning point in my career, and I wish to keep the collaboration and contact in the future.

“It is clear to me that the time at the BCDSS is already a turning point in my career, and I wish to keep the collaboration and contact in the future.”

What in particular have you been using your time in Bonn for?

Paulo Cruz Terra:

For my research, I use the time to analyze the sources that I collected about the legislation and debates about abolition and labor regulation in Brazil and Portuguese Africa, and to access the vast collection of Bonn's University Library. It is also beneficial to participate in BCDSS events, like lectures and workshops.

Stefan Brink:

In principle during “office hours” I have been reading and writing, and also have had many fruitful informal discussions with colleagues and affiliated Bonn researchers. I have also tried to engage in University life, by attending seminars at the university. During weekends, I have tried to have a look around in the Bonn-Cologne region, and also to explore especially the Altstadt, and I have become very fond of both, and miss both now being in quarantine in Sweden.

In times of corona – are you currently able to advance your research well? What is lacking and what could possibly work better than in normal university life?

Stefan Brink:

I am able to continue to work, since I live in the Swedish university town Uppsala with a very good library, which I am able to use, since Sweden has taken this rather unique path of keeping society more or less open. However, it is difficult to find the necessary discipline, which I had while working in Heussallee, but now in quarantine I am surrounded by family and all the everyday matters which distract you. But most of all I miss the informal talks and discussions with colleagues, and the possibility of total, undisturbed focus on my work.

Paulo Cruz Terra:

As mobility was extremely restricted, the trips to do archival research were directly affected. I was in Portugal when the lockdown was declared and needed to come back earlier to Germany. Trips to the archives in Angola and Mozambique were cancelled for this year, but I hope that I can go next year.

Some of the BCDSS's activities are now online, and a very positive effect is that the audience at the Monday lectures, for example, is broader and I have even seen colleagues from Brazil participating. However, I confess that I miss the personal contact, mostly the more focused group discussions. Perhaps we will get more used to this. I hope that soon we can combine both experiences, virtual and personal.

What would you wish for the rest of your time in Bonn?

Caroline Laske:

The interdisciplinary and international set-up of the cluster is very attractive and allows for inspiration, discoveries and interesting conversations that one may not have access to otherwise. Personally, my main purpose for coming to Bonn was to concentrate on my research. The couple of months prior to my arrival I worked very hard to finish all other outstanding tasks, so that I could concentrate on the research agenda I had set for myself. The lockdown due to the corona virus has unfortunately cut us off from our colleagues with the result that the active and inspiring interactions, which I so enjoyed at the BCDSS, have fallen away. My work has been hindered by the lack of access to the library and historical sources.

“*The lockdown due to the corona virus has unfortunately cut us off from our colleagues with the result that the active and inspiring interactions, which I so enjoyed at the BCDSS, have fallen away.*”

Moreover, the lockdown has shown us what is possible, and what we do less well online. I hope that very soon we are allowed to interact personally again. That is not only essential for research and collaboration and future ideas, but also for continuing to forge the sense of a BCDSS “community”. Attendances at lectures and conferences may actually be enhanced if we could allow people to be present physically as well as offer the possibility to others to listen online.

Stefan Brink:

First of all, I wish that it will be possible for me to return to Bonn and the BCDSS as soon as possible, and to return to this total, obsessive focus on one's research – to become a “research nerd” again! It is not always so socially pretty to be such a nerd, but extremely productive.

Paulo Cruz Terra:

My plan is to finish my analysis of the sources that I already have. Furthermore, I hope to meet (observing social distancing, of course) and say goodbye to the people that I met at the BCDSS before going back home.

For future fellows: What are your tips and experiences? What will you remember most about your time in Bonn?

Paulo Cruz Terra:

I would urge future Fellows to enjoy every possibility of getting to know new people, and new research, which means to get involved in the different activities of the BCDSS. The BCDSS is open to new ideas, so my tip would be to think about collaborations and events and suggest them.

I am already nostalgic at the thought of leaving Bonn and the BCDSS. My best memories are connected to the people that I met and had the pleasure to be in contact with Prof. Stephan Conermann, all the management staff (Jeannine Bischoff and Sarah Dusend helped me a lot before and after I arrived), the Pls, the Fellows, the students, and the Research Group Leaders (Christian De Vito, Hanne Østhus and Mariana Armond Dias Paes especially). I will also remember the excellent conditions to do my research provided by the BCDSS, the kind colleagues in the office (Abdelkader Al Ghouz and Lotte Pelckmans), and the everyday help from Jan Hörber and Astrid Lehmberg. I hope that I can come back and say *Auf Wiedersehen*.

Stefan Brink:

I will miss three things the most: the center, staff and colleagues, hence the BCDSS; then Bonn (which I knew very little of, but have become very fond of, esp. the Altstadt, with the restaurants and cafés); and then also the surrounding landscape: I have been walking a lot in the Eifel, in the wine district south of Bonn.

Caroline Laske:

Come to Bonn with nothing else on your to-do list except to concentrate on your planned research. There are so many things to do and interesting people to meet at the BCDSS; time flies too fast. And Bonn is a lovely place with a rich cultural agenda, a beautiful surrounding countryside for hiking and a river to row or kayak on.



Dr. Caroline Laske

holds graduate and post-graduate degrees in law from the University of Cambridge, in linguistics and translation studies from the University of Birmingham and a PhD in legal history from the University of Ghent. She is Heinz Heinen Fellow at the BCDSS from October 2019 to September 2020.

Her research activities as a university researcher (University of Durham, Free University of Brussels, University of Ghent) and her work as a legal expert and specialist consultant for EU and international agencies, have taken her across a number of fields. Today her interdisciplinary research lies at the intersection of law, history and language, applying linguistic analysis to study legal history and concepts, comparative law and translation. She currently holds a research fellowship at the Ghent Legal History Institute and is a visiting fellow at the BCDSS where she works on the subject of legal capacity that medieval women enjoyed or lacked.



Prof. Dr. Stefan Brink

is Professor of Scandinavian Studies, Honorary Research Associate at the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at the University of Cambridge, Adjunct Professor of Archaeology at the University of Aberdeen, and Member of the Royal Scottish Science Academy and the Royal Swedish Academy for Arts, Letters and History. He is Heinz Heinen Fellow at the BCDSS from October 2019 to September 2020.

His research at the BCDSS aims to develop a "Grammar of Dependency" for Scandinavia, for the period which saw an "indigenous" slavery in society – that is early Scandinavia up to c. 1350. He thinks that this terminological analysis is probably the best possibility to grasp the extent and the complexities of this slavery and servitude. Secondly, Brink also likes to combine this philological/linguistic research with the new knowledge we have from archaeology and history, and especially the new insights we are getting thanks to the ongoing cooperation between teams in the Humanities with teams of Science (esp. DNA) scholars.



Prof. Dr. Paulo Cruz Terra

is Professor at the Federal University Fluminense in Brazil and teaches undergraduate classes at the History Department. He is Capes-Humboldt Research Fellow from September 2019 to August 2020.

In his research project he analyzes how legislation, punishment and anti-vagrancy policy entangled with multiple labor relations during the process of the abolition of slavery. It centers on the period 1850–1910 and addresses the Lusophone world, with particular foci on Rio de Janeiro and two of the most important cities of the Portuguese Empire in Africa during this time frame: Lourenço Marques, in Mozambique, and Luanda, in Angola.



From the winter semester 2019/2020 onwards, the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies has held its Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture Series every two weeks. Renowned international researchers present their research and ponder questions of asymmetrical dependency and slavery.

WHO WAS JOSEPH C. MILLER?

Richard Allen

JOSEPH C. MILLER, one of the most eminent historians of slavery of our time, succumbed to cancer on March 12, 2019. Joe, as he was known to his many friends and colleagues, made major contributions to our knowledge and understanding of slavery during the course of a distinguished career at the University of Virginia (1972–2014) where he was T. Cary Johnson, Jr. Professor of History. His magnum opus, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730–1830* (1988), won the African Studies Association's prestigious Melville J. Herskovits Prize in 1989. Beginning in the 1990s he co-edited a number of important works on slavery including the *Macmillan Encyclopedia of World Slavery* (1998), the two-volume *Women and Slavery* (2007, 2008), and two ground-breaking volumes on enslaved children (*Children in Slavery through the Ages* [2009] and *Child Slaves in the Modern World* [2011]). Although trained as an Africanist, a salient feature of Joe's career was his desire to understand the origins, nature, and dynamics of the human experience with slavery on a global scale, a desire made manifest in *The Problem of Slavery as History: A Global Approach* (2012) which was selected by *Choice* as an outstanding academic title. Joe remained actively engaged following his retirement, participating enthusiastically in conferences on slavery and slaving in the Black Sea region, East and Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean, and planning to co-author two books on global slavery. In 2018, he was accorded the honor of election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in recognition of his scholarship and leadership.

Joe's career encompassed other important activities as well. During the 1970s, he began to compile the *Bibliography of Slavery and World Slaving* and supervised this indispensable reference work's expansion for many years. Between 1990 and 1997, he edited the *Journal of African History*, the foremost journal in African historical studies. He was an active member of the African Studies Association, serving as the organization's treasurer (1989–1993) and then as its president (2005–2006). He also participated actively in the American Historical Association, serving as its president in 1998.

No account of Joe's life can be complete without mentioning his personal qualities, beginning with his generous encouragement of colleagues working on slavery and bonded labor all across the globe. Joe was also imbued with a wonderful sense of *joie de vivre*. To spend time with him, be it over lunch or dinner in places such as Milan, Elmina, and Leiden, wine tasting in the caves around Avignon, sharing a bottle of a favorite wine in a hotel room in upstate New York, or talking with him by phone at his home in Charlottesville was always a pleasure, both personally and professionally. Although taken from our midst earlier than he should have been, those of us who had the good fortune to know Joe can take solace from the fact that his presence graced our lives in many meaningful ways.



Prof. Dr. Richard B. Allen

is an internationally-known scholar and teacher trained in anthropology and history recognized for his work on the social and economic history of Mauritius, slavery and indentured labor in the colonial plantation world, and slavery, slave trading, and abolition in the Indian Ocean.

He is the recipient of two Fulbright research awards and prestigious research fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies and the National Endowment for the Humanities. His publications include *Slaves, Freedmen and Indentured Laborers in Colonial Mauritius* (Cambridge University Press, 1999) and *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500–1850* (Ohio University Press, 2014).



The Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies has named its Center for Advanced Studies after Heinz Heinen. Here, Principal Investigators, international visiting Fellows and guest researchers as well as junior scientists meet and discuss issues related to asymmetrical dependency and slavery.

WHO WAS HEINZ HEINEN?

Winfried Schmitz

HEINZ HEINEN was born in 1941 in German-occupied St. Vith, Belgium, and taught at the University of Trier from 1971 to 2006. Heinz Heinen, who is one of the best-known scholars on slavery, began his professional involvement with the subject with the comprehensive literature reviews he was commissioned to write by Joseph Vogt for the academic journals *Historia* and *Ancient Society*. He was critical toward new research by Soviet scholars about antiquity, and in particular ancient slavery. Heinen had learnt Russian during his military service in Brussels – an unusual language for an ancient historian. He was an impressive linguist: at his episcopal school, which taught through the medium of French, he had learnt Latin and ancient Greek, as well as English and Dutch. At the *Université Catholique de Louvain* he added basic Coptic to his repertoire. Under the guidance of his teacher Willy Peremans in Leiden, Heinz Heinen initially focused on Hellenism and papyrology, later moving to the University of Tübingen, where he received his doctorate in 1966. Soon after the publication of his habilitation dissertation in 1970 at the University of Munich, Heinen was appointed to the newly founded University of Trier in 1971. He would work there for the next 35 years, leaving a lasting influence on Classics.

While Hellenism and papyrology continued to be important fields of research for Heinz Heinen, he felt a moral obligation to honor his appointment at Trier, one of the Late Roman imperial capitals, with the writing of a comprehensive work on that city's Roman history. It was published – as the first of its kind in Germany – on the occasion of Trier's two-thousand-year anniversary. But research into slavery

in antiquity increasingly became the focus of his work. In 1998 Heinz Heinen, who had by then already been advising the *Kommission für Geschichte des Altertums* ("Commission for the History of Antiquity") for a number of years, was made a member of *Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur* (Academy of the Sciences and of Literature) in Mainz, and undertook the management of the project *Forschungen zur antiken Sklaverei* ("Research on Ancient Slavery") in 2000, initially jointly with Heinz Bellen and from 2002 as sole director. He forged ahead with great verve. Under his leadership monographs in the publication series *Forschungen zur antiken Sklaverei* ("Research on Ancient Slavery") and *Corpus der römischen Rechtsquellen zur antiken Sklaverei* ("Corpus of Roman Legal Sources on Ancient Slavery") were produced, as well as the *Bibliographie zur antiken Sklaverei* ("Bibliography on Ancient Slavery") which contains some 15,000 titles and is accessible online for free (BASO). But his life's work was to be the *Handwörterbuch der antiken Sklaverei* ("Concise Dictionary of Ancient Slavery") in three handsome volumes, which he edited, but which came out in print only after his too-early death in 2017. It would be the crowning achievement of more than fifty years of research into ancient slavery at the Mainz Academy. Heinz Heinen wanted it to be the means by which the vast store of knowledge he had collected would be made easily accessible. More than 350 scholars from twenty-seven countries contributed to this encyclopedia, which comprises some 4,000 columns.

The *Handwörterbuch* clearly bears Heinz Heinen's stamp. It had been his suggestion that it should include cultures which had been in contact with the Greeks and Romans, such as both pre-Ptolemaic and Byzantine Egypt; Mesopotamia, the Hittite Empire, and Celtic and Germanic Barbarians, and for the purpose of comparison also later epochs such as the Middle Ages and the Islamic world. Taking a global approach, the *Handwörterbuch* includes articles

about the state of scholarship on slavery in a number of individual European countries (e.g. France, Italy and Spain), as well as in Portugal and in Brazil, making the *Handwörterbuch* a compendium of international scholarship on ancient slavery.

He himself wrote many of the articles that touched on his own areas of research. In 1980 he had edited a volume of Soviet scholarship on antiquity (*Geschichte des Altertums im Spiegel der sowjetischen Forschung*) in which leading Russian historians reflected on the state of research for individual epochs of antiquity. Heinz Heinen returned to this topic for the *Handwörterbuch* in his article *Russia/Soviet Union*, which he updated to include the period after Perestroika, a time when Russian scholarship into slavery had come to an almost complete standstill. Other entries pay tribute to the scholarship of numerous Russian researchers into ancient slavery, as does Heinz Heinen's article about the northern Black Sea region, which was the area of origin of many enslaved people in Greece and an important trading center for the slave trade. But he never neglected to look at the bigger picture. He distilled his decades of research into the articles that provided a chronological overview of Greek slavery (*Sklaverei, chronologisch (Griechische Sklaverei)*) and a universalist summary of slavery (*Sklaverei, universalhistorisch*) respectively. His concern to treat slavery in antiquity as belonging to wider universal historical contexts is clearly visible in the topics treated in the edited volumes published under his project leadership: *Menschenraub, Menschenhandel und Sklaverei in antiker und moderner Perspektive* ("Ancient and Modern Perspectives on Abduction, Human Trafficking, and Slavery") and *Kindersklaven – Sklavenkinder* ("Child Slaves – Slave Children").

Heinz Heinen was initially very critical of Marxist research, but his intensive reading of Russian scholarship made him feel increasingly sympathetic towards researchers working under very different conditions than their Western counterparts. His translations, reviews and overviews gave a voice to Russian scholarship in the West. Speaking personally, the work that impressed me most was the essay published in 2010 in *Antike Sklaverei: Rückblick und Ausblick (Forschungen zur antiken Sklaverei 38)*; ("Ancient Slavery: A Look Back and a Look Ahead"), in which he looked back on the research of the past decades, from the 1917 October Revolution to the end of the Soviet Union. He was able to draw on autobiographical writings by Russian scholars. In the course of his work Heinz Heinen had become one of the most important builders of bridges between classicists in East and West. It was thanks to him that the University of Trier became an important point of call for classicists from Russia and Ukraine.

As a scholar, Heinz Heinen was modest and reserved, he always kept an open mind and showed great respect for the work of colleagues. He had many interests and maintained contacts all over the world. It was his ambition to enable a dialog between slavery scholars in East and West despite all theoretical controversies. He was utterly undogmatic. Many of his essays end on a cautionary note, stating that his results should be regarded only ever as provisional. His pronouncements were balanced and he never forced conclusions from his sources, but Heinz Heinen also never closed his eyes to the fact that ancient discourses remained silent about many of the dark sides of slave life and frequently served to legitimize slavery. Psychology remains beyond the historian's grasp, but he at least drew attention to how people in classical antiquity were broken through daily violence and humiliation, and the fact that slave owners endeavored to make enslaved people compliant and deprive them of their own memories.

In honor of Heinz Heinen's achievements for scholarship and the study of slavery he was made a member not only of the Mainz Academy of Sciences and Literature, but also of the Göttingen Academy, the Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België in Brussels, and of the Institut Grand-Ducal de Luxembourg.

A more detailed obituary of Heinz Heinen (in German) including a review of his publications and his achievements in academic organization can be found in: In memoriam Heinz Heinen (1941–2013), in: Heinz Heinen (ed.), Handwörterbuch der antiken Sklaverei, Stuttgart 2017, vol. 1, xiii–xxxiv.



Prof. Dr. Winfried Schmitz

is Professor of Ancient History at the University of Bonn. He is a member of the Academy of Sciences and Literature, Mainz,

and the German Archaeological Institute. Since 2010 he has been leading the project "Research on Ancient Slavery" at the Academy of Sciences in Mainz. His main research topics are slavery in Athens and Sparta, forms of dependent labor in Greek antiquity, and Greek legal and family history.

NEWS

SEMANTICS AND LEXICAL FIELDS OF SLAVERY AND OTHER FORMS OF ASYMMETRICAL DEPENDENCIES

International Workshop
of Research Area A
March 5–6, 2020



Research Area A held its first workshop of the year on the topic of "Semantics and Lexical Fields of Slavery and other Forms of Asymmetrical Dependencies". A number of speakers from the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies presented different case studies from different regions of the entire globe and times from antiquity to the twentieth century.

Organizers:

Jeannine Bischoff and Stephan Conermann

Detailed conference report on [page 48](#)

FREEDOM AND BORDER-MAKING IN THE EARLY-MODERN WORLD

Interdisciplinary
Conference,
February 27–28, 2020

The relationship between border-making and the way the process of creating, shifting and upholding borders creates radical asymmetries of power is still under-researched, despite their importance to the past (and present) world. Border-making also interacts with the construction of modern ideas of freedom, and of its limits. In order to best explore how border-crossing labor can illuminate historical constructions of spatiality and freedom, and in line with the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies' commitment to interdisciplinary research, the participants in this conference aim to connect history, geography and international relations

Organizers:

Mariana Boscariol,

Lisa Hellman and Edmond Smith

Detailed conference report on [page 46](#)

WHAT IS GLOBAL ABOUT GLOBAL ENSLAVEMENT? CROSSING TIME-SPACE DIVIDES

The Cluster Goes Abroad: Joint
Workshop on Global Enslavement
December 29–30, 2019

What does global enslavement mean? Does it mean that enslavement appears in most societies and periods, that is, transcends spatial and temporal boundaries? Is it enough to broaden the range of areas and periods studied to earn the title "global"? Or, does "global" mean that whenever and wherever enslavement existed it had a universal essence that can be defined in terms and concepts which are valid for all its occurrences and manifestations? In other words, is enslavement constant and applicable to any region and period, an aggregate of various forms, processes, and narratives? Alternatively, are these really "either-or" questions, or can they be reconciled as "both"? These questions, which still concern contemporary scholarship, gave rise to several theories and models that aim at understanding enslavement as a world-wide institution.

This conference aimed at bringing together scholars who work with different theoretical approaches and study the diverse manifestations of enslavement in various regions, periods, and aspects in both past and present societies in order to interrogate global enslavement and what was global about it.

Organizers:

Stephan Conermann, Youval Rotman, Ehud R.

Toledano, Rachel Zelnick-Abramovitz

Detailed conference report on [page 44](#)

**FURTHER NEWS
AND ANNOUNCEMENTS OF
BCDSS EVENTS CAN BE FOUND
ON OUR WEBSITE:**

<https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/press-releases>

<https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/events>



FIELD RESEARCHERS' REPORTS



PLAN
DU PORT et DE LA VILLE
DE LA
HAVANNE

Levé en 1798

par D. José del Rio

Capitaine de Frégate de la Marine d'Espagne
et Publie

par Ordre du Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies,
au Dépôt général de la Marine,
l'AN IX de l'Ère Française.

Explication des Chiffres et Lettres de Renvoy.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Cathédrale | 20 La Charité ou St Jean de Dieu |
| 2 Telescopio | 21 Couvent des Capucins |
| 3 Couvent de St Dominique | 22 Religieuses de St Catherine |
| 4 Nouvelle Maison du Commerce | 23 Religieuses de St Thérèse |
| 5 Maison de Force Près Port et Place d'Armes | 24 Les Belles-Œuvres |
| 6 Mole et Douane | 25 St Lázaro |
| 7 Place de St François | 26 Eglise de St Christ |
| 8 Couvent de St François | 27 Montserrat |
| 9 Contaduría de la Marina | 28 Eglise de l'Agne |
| 10 Porte de la Machine | 29 Porte et Batterie de la Pointe |
| 11 Logement des Command ^{rs} gén ^{ls} de la Marine | 30 Porte et Batterie de St Elise |
| 12 La Machine à vapeur | 31 Porte de la Torre |
| 13 Porte et Mole de la Luz | 32 Porte Neuve |
| 14 Eglise de St François de Paula | A Basse du Cabotin |
| 15 Grande Plage | B Basse de la Pastor |
| 16 Couvent de St Augustin | C Vaseaux anclés à fond à 80 et 100 brasses d'eau |
| 17 Religieuses de St Claire | D Basse et Basse de St Elise |
| 18 Eglise de St Esprit | E Grand Equest de la Ville |
| 19 Couvent de la Merced | F Mole de la Cavallerie |

Les Chiffres de Sonder indiquent des Brasses Espagnoles de 2 Varas de Castille ou des
6 7/8 fms (16 Paces ou 120 Toises) de France et plus fortes que les Brasses Françaises de 3,
et les Sondes se rapportent à l'état moyen des mers qui montent et descendent de 6" 9/4
ou 3 pades. Les lettres qui marquent la nature des Fonds signifient g gravier r roche s sable
v vase

Côte de l'Est
l'eau douce

au
res

Jesus Maria

Châ du Prince

SEÑOR DE LA SALUD

Largo ou Forêt
pour l'Établissement des Bains

St Lazare

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.

Due to the corona pandemic, many of our scholars have had to postpone their research trips to a later date. Therefore, this section of the current issue is shorter than usual. The reports we published in this issue look back on research trips that took place before the pandemic. The health and safety of all is of particular concern to us.

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The official Casa de Humboldt (museum) today:
Museo Casa de Alejandro de Humboldt

THE LONG, UNFINISHED SEARCH FOR THE HUMBOLDT HOUSE IN HAVANA AND THE HISTORY OF SLAVERY RESEARCH

Michael Zeuske

JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER PROFESSORSHIP IN HAVANA

AUGUST 2018–JULY 2019

From August 2018 to July 2019 I was at the History Department of the University of Havana (*Departamento de Historia*) as an invited DAAD "Johann Gottfried Herder" professor. I taught seminars on the history of slavery and the slave trade. As always in Cuba, my research agenda included intensive field and archive studies on the history of the island, plantation slavery and Atlantic slavery, as well as slave smuggling in the nineteenth century.

In the nineteenth century mass slavery and human trafficking from Africa made Cuba the richest colony in the world, with an independent industrial revolution and a highly modern society (much more modern than the "mother country" Spain). The naturalist and traveler Alexander von Humboldt published a famous *Essay on Cuba* (published 1826 in French in two volumes as *Essai politique sur l'île de Cuba* and 1827 in Spanish) on the island at this time. While Humboldt has been a subject of my research since my Leipzig years, he seemed to have little to do with my main field and archive research on enslaved people. It was more of a



coincidence that I became interested in the Humboldt house in Havana.

This is how it happened. It had to do with so-called *applied history*: 2019 was the year of Humboldt's 250th birthday. Guided tours of the Old Havana tourism hotspot repeatedly referred to the famous Humboldt house (*casa de Humboldt*), in which the traveler was said to have lived and researched during his visits to Cuba in 1800/1801 and 1804. I was aware that this house, so praised by tourist guides, was not really the Humboldt house. As a contribution to Humboldt Year, I took the opportunity to find the right house and publish a short article about it.

It's easy, I thought, especially since I've been researching Cuba's archives intensively since 1986. During a year of extreme micro research (in all possible *escribanías y notarías*/notaries and in the huge volumes of the *anotaduría de hipotecas*/mortgage books and *Tribunal de Comercio*/Commercial court), I did not find any documentary evidence for the exact address of the real house of Humboldt in Havana. But I knew where it really was (and still is).

Firstly, because Humboldt mentions the "noblest hospitality in the family of Mr. Cuesta. We stayed at Mr. Cuesta's home and placed our collections and instruments in Count O'Reilly's vast mansion in his *Essay on Cuba*, and because of my many conversations with Cuban colleagues (especially Carlos Venegas, the eminent historian of Cuba's urban history). And of course, I found huge amounts of material with my rather special approach: micro searching for a single house in the giant field of the African-Atlantic-Caribbean slave trade and slaveries on land.



Information boards next to the entrance to the official Casa de Humboldt.

While researching the location of the house, I became interested in Humboldt's host, the owner of the house – Juan Luis de la Cuesta. Cuesta was born as a marginal person, in Béarn in France or Navarre in Spain in 1767. He had obviously come to the Caribbean to get rich (first to Saint-Domingue and New Orleans, then to Havana, Cuba). He became rich with slave smuggling, as well as buying and selling of slave ships. Already quite wealthy, in 1798 he married María Josefa de Dolores de Azcárate from a wealthy and influential family from the Havana oligarchy. The bride was fourteen years old. When I came across this man, his family, and his business, my slavery research came into play.

In 1801, Juan Luis de la Cuesta who operated alone and was no longer a member of the mercantile company with Juan de Santa María (as he had been when Humboldt mentions him in his *Essay*), consigned five ships with a total of 320 enslaved people, including a number of children, all on Danish ships, three from San Tomas, one from Santa Cruz, also a Danish colony, and one from the "Costa de Africa" (coast of Africa) on one ship under Danish flag. The "best" (i.e. the most profitable) year for Juan de la Cuesta came in 1802 (the year of the Peace of Amiens between Great Britain and Napoleonic France). In 1802, Juan de la Cuesta, consigned as a single merchant from a total of 154 *armazones* (*armazón* means the group of people who form the enslaved cargo of a slave ship) 24 *armazones* (Costa de Africa: eleven; San Tomas: ten; Charleston: two), with a total number of enslaved: 2624; 57 more are listed under 1803). In addition, Juan Luis de la Cuesta, with a member of the Creole oligarchy of Havana called Lázaro de Chávez, founded a new trading company (which existed only for a short term). This *Compañía de Cuesta y Chavez* consigned another fourteen *armazones* (Costa de Africa: four; San Tomás: five; Providence: four, Jamaica: one) carrying a total of 1466 enslaved people. Juan Luis de la Cuesta thus profited from the sale of 2,681 human bodies and at least half of the sale of 1466 enslaved people, many of them children from newborns to seven-year-olds



The real Humboldt house in Havana (where the travelers were living): the casa de Juan Luis de la Cuesta (calle Aguiar 609 (today), between calle Muralla and calle Sol (in 1800: no. 51 – the street numbers changed since then; see also map detail 3)). Photo by Michael Zeuske

(*muleques*) or children between seven and twelve or fourteen years (*mulecones*). The sale itself was a complicated process and could take a long time; then the enslaved remained in the *barracones*, the slave barracks of Havana.

Juan de la Cuesta was a rich and influential man when he housed Humboldt and his companion Bonpland in his house. He spoke French and was interested in knowledge, art and science. Humboldt stayed in Juan de la Cuesta's house for almost five months (that means also during his second visit to Havana in 1804). Slaves served his meals, cleaned his room, and did his laundry. And Humboldt needed the rich merchant as a banker to cash his checks (*libranzas*) from Berlin in the world currency, the Spanish silver peso (*peso de ocho reales*; *piaster*).



The real palace of Count O'Reilly in Havana, in which the travelers first placed their instruments and from whose roof garden they took important measurements (calle Inquisidor 406, between calle Sol and calle Santa Clara; in 1800: no. 68. See also map detail 2). Photo by Michael Zeuske.

Why has neither the real Humboldt house nor its owner been examined in the almost 150 years of Humboldt research (except by *patrimonio* specialists in Cuba, as I mentioned above – but their research on this topic is mostly not published)?

First of all, certainly because the Cuban government in Havana and the city's official historian (*historiador de la Ciudad de la Habana*) already had difficulties in making the "other" Humboldt House available as a museum ("the world's first Alexander von Humboldt museum"). Once the decision was made for this house, which was re-opened after reconstruction in December 2019, there was no official interest in researching another Humboldt House.

Secondly, because Humboldt portrays Juan Luis de la Cuesta in a very positive light in his published American texts, such as the *Essay on Cuba*. This corresponded to elite customs of the time.

Thirdly, because from 1801 onwards Juan Luis de la Cuesta speculated with his large amounts of money in land purchases and in modern sugar and coffee plantations that required slave labor. He went bankrupt at some time between 1804 and 1808. And he brought down with him a number of other oligarchy merchants. Although he lived until 1821, nobody wanted to know him anymore. And he was not mentioned in the first property register of Havana's houses from 1812. He was simply forgotten.

Fourthly, because of the different dimensions of Humboldt's work. His output consists, roughly, of three types of texts and documents: a) diaries and letters as well as documents and ego documents of others during the trip to America 1799–1804; b) Humboldt's published works, such as the *New Spain Mexico Essay* (*Essai politique sur le royaume de la Nouvelle-Espagne*. Translation to English: *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain* and the *Cuba Essay* in English: *The Island of Cuba*. Translated from Spanish with notes and a preliminary essay by J.S. Thrasher, New York 1856); c) all the works that were written about him and his texts while he was living, and especially after his death until today. Of all of these writings the first dimension is the least well known. Even today there is still a diary by Humboldt which was most likely written in the very house of Juan Luis de la Cuesta in 1804, the diary "Havana 1804" (original title: *Isle de Cube. Antilles en général*) that is as yet to be published in hardcopy.

And finally, fifth, because the Humboldt myth was extremely potent both before and during the 250th anniversary year. A superficial book about Humboldt in the Anglo-Saxon world was awarded dozens of academic and publication prizes (and translated into many languages); publishers and the mass media made a lot of money with it. But such "details" as those of the Humboldt house in Havana and Humboldt's real host, or the importance of slavery and the slave trade for the noble science did not matter.



Humboldt's Havana: the José del Río map of 1789. Humboldt met del Río in Havana in 1801. HABANA 1798. Río, José del, Plan du Port et de la ville de la Havanne, levé en 1798 par ... et publié ... au Depot general de la Marine, en 1800. Gravé par E. Collin. Escrit par Besanzon. [Paris] 1800. It is a reprint of the map published in 1798; see: Biblioteca Nacional de Cuba, La Habana (BNC) Sala Cubana, fondo Mapas, 722.9H11 (FK), 1800, Rio.

What does all of this have to do with the *Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies* (BCDSS)? As the BCDSS stands for intense and real research, it shows that Humboldt had traveled to an "empire of slavery", the Spanish Empire. (Of course, the Federal Republic of America, called the United States, developed into another "empire of slavery" between 1790 and 1820). Humboldt's close connection to slavery, to slave owners and slave traders in the everyday life of his trip also shows that science and the quest for knowledge, which are often portrayed as distant from profane economics, were closely linked to, if not dependent on, slavery. Perhaps the most complicated thing is that Humboldt did become an opponent of slavery due to his experiences on his American journey (certainly also due to his experiences in connection with Juan Luis de la Cuesta).

But it was also simply part of his self-evident elite status and taste to live in a house with many slaves whose owner's wealth was based on the slave trade. In a very interesting way, Simon Gikandi in his book *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (2011) recorded the vexing connection between slavery and modernity – most clearly in the lives of the upper classes (domestic slavery, personal servants, enslaved cooks and washers/ironers, slave children as kinds of living toys for children of the oligarchy), clothing, food (often food and beverages, as well as sugar and tobacco, were produced by slaves) and taste – to repeat this important perspective of the contemporary elite –, as well as in the symbolic presentation of luxury (paintings, consumption or the furnishing of houses). In a general sense, Alexander von Humboldt also shows that the harshest critics of a society of exploitation,

in this case the society of modern second slavery, often came from their elite. Finally: the search for non-textual embodiments and, how should I put it, living spaces (houses of enslavers, enslaved and the guests of the former) is mainly part of the *Embodied Dependencies* research area, but also of area of *Slavery Practices and area of Labor and Spatiality*.

Literature

Alexander von Humboldt, *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba*. A Critical Edition. Ottmar Ette, Vera Kutzinski (eds.), Chicago and London 2011.

<https://edition-humboldt.de/H0002922>



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 Senior Research Professor of the Cluster of Excellence "Beyond Slavery and Freedom" hosted by the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies. He is a corresponding member of the Academia de la Historia, Havana, Cuba. In his scholarship within the cluster's research scope he focuses on different 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, e.g. life histories of enslaved people and slave traders.



Main entrance to the hospital of Roça Água Izé; south of São Tomé



Benguela Railway Station



Portuguese colonial building close to the port - Benguela



Praia Morena, in Benguela – one of the most important ports of the transatlantic slave trade.

THE CLUSTER GOES TO AFRICA

Mariana Armond Dias Paes,
Juelma Matos Ngala and Maysa Espíndola Souza

RESEARCH TRIPS TO ANGOLA, GUINEA BISSAU AND SÃO TOMÉ E PRÍNCIPE 2019

The Research Group "Law and the Creation of Dependency in the Ibero-Atlantic" focuses on how law constructed categories of dependency in the shared legal environment of the Ibero-Atlantic, that is, Atlantic territories formerly under Portuguese or Spanish jurisdictions, between the eighteenth and the twentieth centuries. For many decades, Africa was overlooked in studies focusing on Global Labor History and Global Legal History. By dialoguing with these two historiographical traditions, the Research Group seeks to include Africa in these narratives and to stress the central role the continent's inhabitants played in the framing of legal categories of dependency. African engagement in normative production is much broader, richer and more complex than current scholarship shows. In order to achieve this goal, it is paramount that research is conducted in local archives.

The documents held in local archives show the actual engagement of different social groups in disputing the concrete meanings of legal norms and legal categories of dependency. They also allow us to better see how the interaction of different normative systems shaped asymmetrical relationships in colonial societies. These documents shed light on the fundamental participation of non-European agents in the process of normative production. Thus, working in

local archives, with locally produced sources, can be a method to overcome the blind spots of Global Legal History and Global Labor History on the production of legal categories of dependency.

In the last year, visiting local archives was a priority of the Research Group members. The Research Group Leader, Mariana Dias Paes, visited the Angolan National Archives in Luanda, and also consulted the Benguela District Court's court cases collection. The latter is also at the core of Juelma Matos Ngala's research for her PhD dissertation. The Angolan National Archives hold an extremely rich collection that dates from the sixteenth century. Among those, court cases and colonial administrators' reports are the most important sources for Dias Paes' research. The reports in particular shed light on the entanglements between different normative systems that operated in the territory of Angola. Understanding these interactions enables a more finely grained analysis of legal categories of dependency and how they operated.

The court cases from the National Archives and from the Benguela District Court show the active participation of different social groups in the production of legal categories of dependency. Dias Paes focuses on lawsuits that discussed people's statuses, and on land disputes. Her research argues that both labor relations and access to land were entangled actively in the formation of categories of dependency, a claim that finds support in these two kinds of judicial disputes. Matos Ngala, on the other hand, focuses her research on the analytical unit of the "house", understood not only as a family unit but also as a unit of productivity that influenced the structuring of legal categories of dependency in Benguela society. Among the court case collection, she focuses specifically on disputes over inventory and freedom.

Maysa Espíndola Souza is the Research Group's second PhD student. In 2019, she visited the Historical Archive of São Tomé e Príncipe and the National Historical Archives of Guinea Bissau. There she was able to access documents such as court cases, work contracts, census data, and legislation. These documents brought important data for her PhD research, which compares different spaces of the Portuguese Empire between the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. These sources will enable an analysis of a wide range of relationships of dependency and different legal statuses of Africans under Portuguese colonialism. In addition, she visited old plantations and talked to the descendants of former laborers in São Tomé and also held conversations with people who fought against Portuguese colonial rule in Guinea Bissau.

All these archival research trips were the prelude for the research they will develop over the coming years within the framework of the Cluster of Excellence. The data collected will open up new perspectives on dependency studies, and underline the agency of African populations in the making of law. We are all looking forward to the publications to come!



Dr. Mariana Armond Dias Paes

is leader of the Research Group "Law and the Creation of Dependency in the Ibero-Atlantic" at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies. In her research project, she analyzes how legal categories, norms and institutions of property, status and labor law

created asymmetrical structures of dependencies in the shared legal environment of the Lusophone South Atlantic. She examines legal institutions and categories that shaped slave and land ownership as well as the statuses of diverse groups of people in-between slavery and freedom between the 1780s and the 1880s, in Brazil and Angola.



Juelma da Conceição Gomes de Matos de Ngála

is doctoral researcher at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies and at the Max Planck Institute for European Legal History. Her research project "The Transformation of Slavery in Benguela, Angola: Dependency and Social Categories in the nineteenth Century"

aims to unravel the concealments or omissions involving this topic, through the analysis of court cases existing in the Benguela District Court, dating from the nineteenth century. She is part of the Research Group "Law and the Creation of Dependency in the Ibero-Atlantic".



Maysa Espíndola Souza

is doctoral researcher at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, at the Max Planck Institute for European Legal History and at the Federal University of Santa Catarina. Her research explores free labor policies instituted in Africa by the Portuguese

State from the first legal measures enacted for the abolition of slavery to the promulgation of the Colonial Act. During the post-emancipation period, Portuguese Africa experienced the proliferation of labor arrangements in which legally free individuals were submitted to compulsory work. Beyond the borders of slavery and freedom, labor relations in Portuguese Africa need to be analyzed in their complexities. Although legislation was the same, local negotiations greatly influenced the forms of exploitation of free labor. She is part of the Research Group "Law and the Creation of Dependency in the Ibero-Atlantic".



Learning how to use differential GPS.

DIGITAL METHODS FOR SAFEGUARDING WORLD HERITAGE

Dita Auziņa

RESEARCH TRIP TO IRAQ

OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 2019

In 2015 the world watched with horror as terrorist group Daesh destroyed ancient archaeological sites in Syria and Iraq in front of rolling cameras. According to an evaluation by UNESCO, it was the largest destruction of cultural heritage in the world since the Second World War. Many cultural and research institutions all around the world raced to set up programs to support Iraqi and Syrian archaeologists and cultural specialists in their fight to save what could be saved and to document what soon will be lost.



Iraqi archaeologists learning to set up and use a Leica Multi-station, which can be used for point recording and 3D scanning.



Among them, the British Museum set up The Iraq Emergency Heritage Management Training Scheme to provide Iraqi specialists with modern digital equipment and skills to face this extremely complicated task. In 2017 I joined the British Museum team on an annual basis to train Iraqi archaeologists in the use of archaeological survey equipment such as dGPS, Total Station, 3D-scanners and drones, as well as in how to process their data in a GIS environment. In October and November of 2019, I joined the British Museum team as a specialist from Bonn University, Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies.

The training takes place first in London, wherein the British Museum Iraqi archaeologists learn theoretical aspects of cultural heritage maintenance and restoration; the second part is a two-month practical training at archaeological sites in Iraq. Our team is situated at Tello Girsu, one of the earliest known cities of the world, revered in the third millennium BC as the sanctuary of the Sumerian heroic god Ningirsu. Girsu was the sacred metropolis and center of a city-state that lay in the south-easternmost part of the Mesopotamian river valley. We are here to provide practical training for eight Iraqi female archaeologists while excavating Ningirsu temple and working on the conservation of the remains of the oldest known bridge in the world. The Iraq Scheme aims to train archaeologists of both genders, all religious backgrounds and from all regions of Iraq. Therefore, for the last seasons Tello Girsu has become a training ground for Iraqi female teams.

We start our training every morning at 5.00 am and return from the site at the early hour of 1.00 pm. The heat of the southern Iraqi sun is a great challenge not only for archaeologists from Europe and Kurdistan, but even for trainees from southern Iraq. The archaeology field in Iraq is strongly dominated by men, and even those women who have struggled their way up in this field are typically more focused on museum work and artefact analysis, and so have less experience in on-site fieldwork. Also, the work with technical equipment is more commonly considered the realm of their male colleagues. For two months, every morning, we will learn to set up a Total Station, measure the geographic location of archaeological features, 3D-scan standing architectural structures,



During a systematic archaeological survey, the archaeologists can strengthen their practical and digital skills in a real-life situation: setting out a grid with dGPS, recording coordinates of archaeological finds by GPS, entering survey information in the database and preparing the survey maps in a GIS environment.

and also gain experience in how to conduct a systematic archaeological survey. During the afternoons we study archaeological database management and learn how to make maps out of the data we collected in the field. It is an extremely steep learning curve, but the results are worth it. Digital technologies can enormously increase the speed with which heritage sites are documented, and it is extremely important now that Iraqi archaeologists are a race against time.

For me personally, this has been an amazing experience to improve my teaching skills in very complicated circumstances while at the same time working with extremely motivated archaeologists who are enthusiastic to go digital in the different stages of their careers.



Dita Auziņa

is doctoral researcher at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies. She is interested in the way past societies interacted with the landscape and how this interaction shaped

the social structures in communities. Her Ph.D. project focuses on the early colonization period in the Caribbean and Central American and on the interaction between indigenous communities, European conquistadors and African slaves. Its aims to understand how the newly established hierarchy between different ethnic groups and genders is represented in the spatial organization of both households and settlements. She is part of the Research Group Dependency, Gender and Labor in the Household. Pictures posted here are ethically authorized by their custodians.



A Caribbean Shore household with basalt blocks from which sculptures used to be made in the pre-contact period.

PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK IN THE MISKITO COAST, NICARAGUA

Dita Auziņa



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the early colonization period in the Caribbean and Central American and on the interaction between indigenous communities, European conquistadors and African slaves. Its aims to understand how the newly established hierarchy between different ethnic groups and genders is represented in the spatial organization of both households and settlements. She is part of the Research Group Dependency, Gender and Labor in the Household. Pictures posted here are ethically authorized by their custodians.

RESEARCH TRIP TO NICARAGUA

JANUARY 2020



The sign at the entry to Pearl Lagoon, a village in the north of Bluefields, says "Welcome to Pearl Lagoon. We are a community that says yes to life, no to drugs and violence". It represents local community and government attempts to keep drug trafficking out of Nicaragua.

How and where people lived during the early contact period between people from Europe, the Americas and Africa on the Miskito shore, Nicaragua, are the basic questions I am trying to answer in my PhD research. The Miskito Shore is the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua and Honduras which remained under the control of



its indigenous and African descended inhabitants, the Miskitous, during the European colonization of the Americas. While the location of the European settlements can be found by analyzing historical maps and other documents created by Europeans, the locations of households inhabited by Africans and Indigenous Americans often can be traced by only using archaeological methods. Therefore at the beginning of 2020, I went to the Nicaraguan Caribbean coast to visit some already known archaeological sites and to prepare for an archaeological survey during the following seasons.

INTERSECTIONAL HOUSEHOLDS AND DEPENDENCIES OF THE MISKITO COAST

The Miskito coast, a Caribbean coast of Nicaragua and Honduras, is named after the mixed indigenous-African cultural group who maintained control of their own territory until the 19th century. Their dynasty of kings ruled uninterrupted for 250 years, recognized by major European political powers. However, the Miskito people did not live

in isolation. They entered into political and economical representations with European colonial powers; they also formed households together with European settlers, free and enslaved Africans and other indigenous groups. Relationships both within and among the households were defined by asymmetrical dependencies influenced by gender and ethnicity, as well as the individual's or the group's ability to control the landscape. To analyze dependencies among the households it is necessary to understand where the households were located.



Rock with pre-colonial rock carvings typical to the larger Caribbean region and also Central Nicaragua. An archaeological site near Kukra Hill, Nicaragua.

IN SEARCH OF MISKITO HOUSEHOLDS

While some historians have researched Miskito coast societies, mainly looking into political interactions between the Miskito elite and European powers, only a very limited amount of archaeological work has been conducted in the region. This does not surprise, as the remains are visually unimpressive and in most cases hidden under dense mangroves, making them accessible only by boat. To identify the archaeological remains of potential locations of Miskito households in the contact period, I cooperated with the local museum in Bluefields (BICU/CIDCA) and with local communities. BICU/CIDCA is a local cultural center where people from the entire Caribbean coast of Nicaragua bring archaeological finds they accidentally came across during their daily activities. Some of the finds contain information where they approximately have been found. This can be used to identify the location of archaeological sites. Another way is to talk with local farmers and hunters who know their landscape and can indicate locations of archaeological sites.



A typical shell midden, on the Caribbean coast.

BEING IN BLUEFIELDS

Conducting archaeological fieldwork in the region around Bluefields is an exciting experience, but one filled with quite some challenges. Despite the relaxed atmosphere and reggae music all around the neighborhoods, Bluefields is not a typical (is there such a thing at all?) Caribbean beach town. For many centuries it was a comfortable port for privateers involved in the illegal slave trade, and Bluefields has maintained its roughness. Some of the locals claim that these days, it plays a part in illicit drug trafficking. When addressing local inhabitants to ask for a way to archaeological sites, the answer might be provided in Creoli English, Spanish or in the Miskito language. A survey should always be conducted involving members of local communities, as due to conflicts over land ownership, locals tend to treat strangers with suspicion.

EVENTS PROGRAM

Online
via Zoom



LECTURE SERIES

The Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture Series continues in 2020

After the first lectures which offered new insights into the research on dependency and slavery, we will continue with the Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture Series in 2020. Renowned international scholars will present their research and speak on questions of asymmetrical dependency and slavery.

July 2020

- | | |
|---------|--|
| July 20 | Jonathan Brown , Georgetown University
Did Premodern Muslim Scholars Consider Slavery Evil? |
| July 27 | Sarah Abel , University of Cambridge:
Seeking Identity in the Body: Debates around the Genetic Reconstruction of African Ancestry in Post-slavery American Societies |

August 2020

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| August 3 | Reuven Amitai , Hebrew University of Jerusalem:
A Very Peculiar Institution: Military Slavery in the Mamluk Sultanate |
| August 10 | Amal Shahid , Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva:
„Gratuitous“ Famine Relief Administration in Nineteenth Century Colonial India |

September 2020

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| September 7 | Ian Hodder , University of Cambridge and Stanford University:
The Force Fields of Things: An Archaeological Focus on Sequences of Things |
| September 21 | Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture on “Punishment, Labor and Law: Perspectives from the Global South”
Raquel Sirotti , Max-Planck Institute for European Legal History, Frankfurt:
Within the Law: Criminal Law and Political Repression in Brazil (1889–1930) |

October 2020

- | | |
|------------|---|
| October 5 | Betül İpşirli Argıt , Marmara University:
Considerations on the Agency of Freed Female Palace Slaves in the Ottoman World |
| October 19 | Rudi Simek , University of Bonn:
Slavery in Early Medieval Northern Europe |

November 2020

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| November 2 | Ana Mateos , Ludwig Maximilian University Munich: tba |
| November 16 | Klara Boyer-Rossol , Centre international de recherches sur les esclavages et post-esclavages:
The Makua or “Mozambiques” in Madagascar during the Nineteenth Century: Slave Trades, Slavery, Emancipations and Ancestry in the Big Island |
| November 30 | Claudia Rauhut , Free University of Berlin:
Redressing Historical Injustice: Caribbean Claims for Slavery Reparations |

December 2020

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| December 14 | Boudewijn Sirks , University of Oxford:
The Colonate in the Roman Empire: A Balance-act Between Freedom and Bond |
|-------------|--|

WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

Online
via Zoom



August 28–29, 2020

**SOCIAL STATUS
OR NORMATIVE
DIFFERENCE? THE RANK
OF SLAVES IN ANTIQUE
ROMAN SOCIETY**

Workshop

organized by
Martin J. Schermaier

October 1–2, 2020

**SLAVERY AND OTHER
FORMS OF STRONG
ASYMMETRICAL
DEPENDENCIES:
SEMANTICS, LEXICAL
FIELDS, NARRATIVES**

International Conference

organized by
Jeannine Bischoff,
Stephan Conermann and
Marion Gymnich

December 10–12, 2020

**CURRENT TRENDS
IN SLAVERY STUDIES
IN BRAZIL**

International Conference

organized by
Paulo Cruz Terra

December 9, 2020

FILM FESTIVAL

organized by
Paulo Cruz Terra and
Lotte Pelckmans

January 18–19, 2021

**LATIN
AMERICA**

Workshop

organized by
Christian De Vito and
Paulo Cruz Terra

February 18–19, 2021

**PUNISHMENT,
LABOR AND THE
LEGITIMATION
OF POWER**

Interdisciplinary Workshop

organized by
Adam Fagbore

**CURRENT EVENTS AND PUBLIC
LECTURES AT THE BCDSS**

<https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/events>

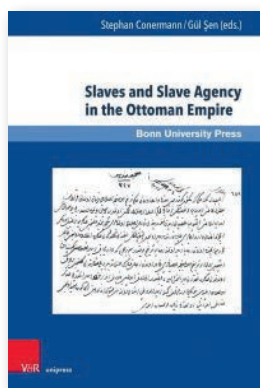
**PUBLIC LECTURES AND OTHER
BCDSS EVENTS AS AUDIO PODCASTS**

[https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/events/podcasts/
video-and-audio-podcasts-of-selected-conferences](https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/events/podcasts/video-and-audio-podcasts-of-selected-conferences)

NEW PUBLICATIONS

NEW BOOK BY STEPHAN CONERMANN AND GÜL ŞEN

Slaves and Slave Agency in the Ottoman Empire



Slaves and Slave Agency in the Ottoman Empire offers a new contribution to slavery studies relating to the Ottoman Empire. Given the fact that the classical binary of "slavery" and "freedom" derives from the transatlantic experience, this volume presents an alternative approach by examining the strong asymmetrical relationships of dependency documented in the Ottoman Empire. A closer look at the Ottoman social order discloses manifold and ambiguous conditions involving enslavement practices, rather than a single universal pattern. The authors examine various forms of enslavement and dependency with a particular focus on agency, i. e. the room for maneuver which the enslaved could secure for themselves, or else the available options for action in situations of extreme individual or group dependencies.

Stephan Conermann and Gül Şen (eds.):
Slaves and Slave Agency in the Ottoman Empire
 Ottoman Studies / Osmanistische Studien, Vol. 7
 2020, 448 pages with 10 figures, hardcover
 € 60,- GER / € 49,99 eBook
 ISBN 978-3-8471-1037-8
 Bonn University Press by V&R unipress

CURRENT PUBLICATIONS
OF THE BCDSS:

<https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/publications>

SECOND EDITION BY MICHAEL ZEUSKE

**Handbook on the History of Slavery:
A Global History from the Beginnings to the Present Day**



Michael Zeuske completely revised and updated his standard work for the second edition as well as significantly expanding it. The history of slavery is systematically presented in this handbook for the first time in a global-historical perspective. The starting point is an understanding of slavery as a capitalization of human bodies. It analyzes the most diverse forms, types and developmental epochs of slavery and human trafficking systems – on all continents, oceans and seas, in their respective names and historical-cultural contexts. On a broad empirical basis, a history of slavery is thus created, which began around 10,000 BC and continues to this day.

Michael Zeuske:

Handbuch Geschichte der Sklaverei: Eine Globalgeschichte von den Anfängen bis heute.

2020, 739 pages, hardcover; De Gruyter, Berlin & Boston 2019 (2nd edition); € 279,- GER

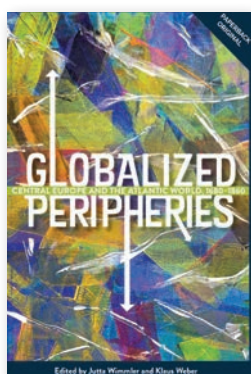
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110561630>

ISBN-10: 3110278804; ISBN-13: 978-3110278804

2 Volumes

NEW BOOK BY JUTTA WIMMLER, KLAUS WEBER

Globalized Peripheries: Central Europe and the Atlantic World, 1680–1860



Globalized Peripheries examines the commodity flows and financial ties within Central and Eastern Europe in order to situate these regions as important contributors to Atlantic trade networks.

The early modern Atlantic world, with its flows of bullion, of free and unfree labourers, of colonial produce and of manufactures from Europe and Asia, with mercantile networks and rent-seeking capital, has to date been described almost entirely as the preserve of the Western sea powers. More recent scholarship has rediscovered the dense entanglements with Central and Eastern Europe. Globalized Peripheries goes further by looking beyond slavery and American plantations. Contributions look at the trading practices and networks of merchants established in Central and Eastern Europe, investigate commodity flows between these regions and the Atlantic world, and explore the production of export commodities, two-way migration as well as financial ties. The volume uncovers new economic and financial connections between Prussia, the Habsburg Empire, Russia, as well as northern and western Germany with the Atlantic world. Its period coverage connects the end of the early modern world with the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Globalized Peripheries

Central Europe and the Atlantic
World, 1680-1860

Edited by Jutta Wimpler,

Klaus Weber; 286 pages


People, Markets, Goods:

Economies and Societies in

History

Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer

2020.



We want our conference reports to give an impression of the thematic range of our Cluster of Excellence. Researchers from various disciplines approached the topic of **strong asymmetrical dependency** through a variety of questions and perspectives across different epochs. In order to enable this multidisciplinary approach, the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies organizes conferences with international scholars, as well as a series of workshops, seminars, lectures and panel discussions, throughout the year. In the following pages, we present to you the core questions and findings of these events.

In light of the corona pandemic, we decided to cancel all scheduled activities in the Cluster until July 2020. This is why this section is also shorter than usual. The conference reports that we print here look back on conferences that took place before the pandemic. We are working to reschedule all events and activities for later this year.

CONFERENCES LECTURE AND OTHER EVENTS

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CLUSTER OF EXCELLENCE?

SERIES





WHAT IS GLOBAL ABOUT GLOBAL ENSLAVEMENT? CROSSING TIME-SPACE DIVIDES

Michael Zeuske

JOINT WORKSHOP

DECEMBER 29–30, 2019

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY

The study of enslavement has acquired urgency over the last two decades. Social scientists, legal scholars, human rights activists, and historians study forms of enslavement in both modern and historical societies, seeking common conceptual grounds. This “turn” has also intensified awareness of enslavement as a global phenomenon, inviting a comparative, trans-regional approach across time-space divides. Against this background *Stephan Conermann* (University of Bonn), *Youval Rotman*, *Ehud R. Toledano* and *Rachel Zelnick-Abramovitz* (all Tel-Aviv University) organized a joint workshop which took place on December 29–30, 2019, at Tel Aviv University under the title, “What is Global about Global Enslavement?”

For *Karoline Noack*, *Gül Şen*, *Hanne Østhus*, *Stephan Conermann*, *Reinhard Zöllner*, *Christoph Witzernath*, *Roberto Hofmeister Pich*, and *Michael Zeuske* (all University of Bonn) from the BCDSS, it was also a workshop subtitled “The Center Goes Abroad”. For me personally, the trip to Israel was particularly interesting because, on the one hand, I appreciate and

know the scientific work of my Israeli colleagues and co-organizers Ehud Toledano and Youval Rotman very much and, on the other hand, because it was the first trip to Israel for me and for many of my colleagues.

The Workshop included the following sections: "Global, Comparative, Local: Competing Interpretations" chaired by *Hila Shamir* and *Youval Rotman* (both Tel-Aviv University), "Family, Household, Enslavement (1)" chaired by *Dror Zeevi*, (Ben Gurion University of the Negev), "Population Movement and Forms of Labor Dependency" chaired by *Adriana Kemp* (Tel-Aviv University), "Ideologies, Memories, Reflections" chaired by *Benjamin Isaac* (Tel-Aviv University), "Enslavement and Religion" chaired by *Ehud Toledano*, "Family, Household, Enslavement (2)" chaired by *Uri Yiftach* (Tel-Aviv University). The final evaluations of the workshop were given by *Stephan Conermann* and *Ehud Toledano*.

In the first section, *Michael Zeuske* spoke about "Slavery or Slaves as Global and Globalizing?" The paper by *P. Ismard* "The Greeks and the Others: Forms and Limits of Comparatism about Ancient Slavery (on the asylum institution in the ancient world)" was presented by *Rachel Zelnick-Abramovitz*.

In section 2 *Reinhard Zöllner* spoke about "Maritime Interactions and Slavery in Premodern East Asia" while *Christoph Witzernrath* referred on "Negotiating Early Modern Transottomann Dependency and Slaving Zones: An Arab in Moscow".

In the third section the speakers were *António de Almeida Mendes* (University of Nantes), who gave a lecture on "A Local Social History of Slavery in the Portuguese Framework", *Douglas Cole Libby* (Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte), who talked about "Family Connections: Slaveholding among African and Afro-Descendant Women in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-century Brazil", and *Hanne Østhus*, who spoke about "Slavery and Service in the Household: Non-European Servants and Slaves in Eighteenth-Century Denmark-Norway".

In section 4 *Gül Şen* presented her paper "Between Two Spaces: Being Slave and Being Labor in the Ottoman Navy" and *Karoline Noack* gave insights into "Mobilization as Strategy of Power and Government vs. Stationary Production Methods: The Case of the Mitimaes in the Inca Cochabamba Valley (Bolivia)".

In section 5 *Roberto Hofmeister Pich* contributed to "The Ideology of Black Slavery: Philosophical, Juridical, and Theological Accounts by Seventeenth-Eighteenth Century Latin American Thinkers" and *Alice Bellagamba* (University of Milan) gave a lecture

about "Power Struggles, Memory Battles, and New Dynamics of Dispossession: The Twentieth Century History of West African Ideas of Slavery". In section 5 *Tamar Herzig* (Tel-Aviv University) explained her ideas concerning her paper "From Tunis to Tuscany: Gender, Religion, and Global Slavery in the Early Modern Era" and *Daniel Hershenzon* (University of Connecticut) talked about "Slavery and Religious Violence in the Early Modern Mediterranean".

In the last section *Miriam Frenkel* (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) spoke about "Between Mistress and Slave-girl: Domestic Slavery in Medieval Jewish Society" and *Jane-Marie Collins* (The University of Nottingham) explained the "Imagining Domestic Order through Relations of Racial Discord: Uma senhora brasileira em seu lar (Jean Baptiste Debret, c1839)".

During the concluding discussion of this very successful and interesting workshop, led by *Ehud Toledano* and *Stephan Conermann*, there was a lively debate about the necessity and possibility of stronger links to global history.

The event was sponsored by the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, the Tel Aviv University's Abraham Foundation, the Research Authority, the Zvi Yavetz School of Historical Studies, the Chaim Rosenberg School of Jewish Studies and Archeology, the David Berg Foundation's Institute for Law and History, the School of Cultural Studies, and the Morris E. Curriel Institute for European Studies.



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 Senior Research Professor at the Cluster of Excellence "Beyond Slavery and Freedom" hosted by the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies. He is a corresponding member of the Academia de la Historia, Havana, Cuba. In his scholarship within the cluster's research scope he focuses on different 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, e.g. life histories of enslaved people and slave traders.



FREEDOM AND BORDER-MAKING IN THE EARLY MODERN WORLD

Mariana Boscariol

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 27–28, 2020

Organizers:

Dr Lisa Hellman (University of Bonn)

Dr Mariana Boscariol (University of Manchester)

Dr Edmond Smith (University of Manchester)



The interdisciplinary conference *Freedom and Border-Making in the Early Modern World* was the result of a collaboration between the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies and the British Academy funded project "Living on the Edge: Experiences and Responses to Europe's Changing Borderlands" at the University of Manchester. Considering the multifaceted nature of border-making processes, this workshop proposed to consider early modern borders through critical engagement with the international relations theory of "securitization". The primary objective was to apply this concept to early modern history to explore the concept and its repercussions.

Practices of border-making offer a chance to understand the making of past concepts regarding freedoms to live, work and travel – or the lack of such freedoms. Indeed, to zoom in on the experience of changing conceptions and policies of borders through this lens of securitization highlights the making of radical inequalities, as well as opportunities arising from such states of flux. We hoped that by encouraging historians to interrogate this conceptualization within specific border-regions we could help expand the theoretical and methodological frameworks available for interrogating the role played by borders in social, economic and political developments.

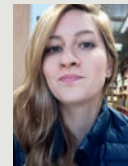
The first day started with the organizers *Lisa Hellman* and *Edmond Smith* presenting the "Living on the Edge" project and the key theoretical framework that would form the basis of discussion throughout the conference. The welcome words and introduction were followed by the keynote speaker *Sari Nauman* (University of Gothenburg), who gave her talk on securitizing space and time and explored the applicability of the concept together with case studies from the Baltic region. It being the only presentation of the day meant that there was a long period for questions and discussion.

The second day was divided into three sessions: The first, "Meanings and Uses of Borders", started with a presentation of *Edmond Smith* (University of Manchester) on the Akan borderlands in West Africa that focused on discussing the impact of deep-borders on world-systems. The second was delivered by *Paulo Pinto* (CHAM, New University of Lisbon), who spoke about the idea of an imaginary border when drawing the boundaries of Iberian empires in Asia in the early modern period. The third paper examined security and freedom in border regions in pre-unification Italy and was presented by *Laura di Fiore* (University of Naples "Federico II") through video conference.

The second session was designated "Communities on/between/across Borders". It started with the work of *Dorothee Goetze* (University of Bonn) about social advancement, adaption, subordination and resistance when dealing with integration and social borders in the seventeenth century Baltic region. She was followed by *David Veevers* (Queen Mary, University of London), who spoke about conflicts between colonial expectations and local realities in the process of border-making on the West Coast of Sumatra from the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century. The last speaker of the panel was *Nicoletta Rolla* (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris), who gave her presentation by video conference about labor and the circulation of people in Alpine regions in the eighteenth century.

The last session was entitled "Borders as Spaces for Exchange and Encounter". The first to present was *Mariana Boscariol* (University of Manchester), who explored the Portuguese settlements in Eguafó and Macao to compare different experiences of European encounter in the early modern world. The last speaker was *Barend Noordam* (Autonomous University of Barcelona) with a paper on "The transfer of the Musket to China as a Consequence of Ottoman-Portuguese Geopolitical Rivalry", which discussed how weapons crossed borders.

The final remarks were made by *Edmond Smith* and *Lisa Hellman*. The overall evaluation of the conference was that it was a very enriching event that made possible the encounter of a variety of early modern and modern historians to discuss their works on borders, showing not only the possibilities that the theory brings for the study of the period but also its limitations. All the contributions are expected to be published in a forthcoming publication.



Dr. Mariana Boscariol

is currently a post-doctoral research associate on the "Living on the Edge" project at the University of Manchester. Her role is to help understand how the Akan merchants simultaneously

adapted to Arab and Portuguese commercial engagement by radically altering the physical spaces of local markets, and the process by which deals were struck. After writing her doctoral dissertation on Jesuit activity in Brazil and Japan in the 16th century, her current main interests of research are cross-cultural and economic history, exploring categories such as governance, commerce, borders, and circulation mostly, but not exclusively, in early modern East Asia.



SEMANTICS AND LEXICAL FIELDS OF SLAVERY AND OTHER FORMS OF ASYMMETRICAL DEPENDENCIES

Jeannine Bischoff

JOINT WORKSHOP

MARCH 5–6, 2020
UNIVERSITY OF BONN

In October 2019 the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) started its first thematic year – that of Research Area A "Semantics – Lexical Fields – Narratives". In this Research Area the BCDSS attempts to establish a common language of analysis for the large variety of strong asymmetrical dependencies that can be observed worldwide across time and space.

To begin the search for the BCDSS' own analytical vocabulary, the BCDSS decided to hold two workshops: One on Semantics and Lexical Fields (March 5–6, 2020) and one on Narratives (originally planned for July 2–3, 2020).

For the Workshop on semantics and lexical fields, we approached members of Research Area A – covering topics from Ancient Egypt up to early twentieth century Tibet – and also invited Professor Hans-Heinrich Nolte, an established scholar in the field of historical semantics.

We asked all participants to prepare an overview of how situations or relations of strong asymmetrical dependency were represented in their individual sources. The outcome was more than satisfying. We spent two days explaining and describing to each other what it meant to be strongly dependent in Ancient China, the Islamicate World, or how strong asymmetric dependency is spoken about in the Old Testament or the laws of ancient Rome. The openness and willingness of all participants to engage in trans-disciplinary dialogue resulted in a number of moments of astonishment that it was, in fact, possible to speak to and understand each other.

The sources available to the speakers in their research showed once more the diversity of the BCDSS' disciplines, and the resulting material and approaches on which analysis can be based – from contracts and imperial decrees to demographic lists, inscriptions and visual representations.

In the end we all left the room with more knowledge than we had when we entered it. We found that despite the wide variety of approaches – historical semantics, lexical field analysis – we could identify dependencies in all presentations. The various terminologies presented created not only a framework of knowledge within their own respective societies. By compiling and putting them into an order – of any kind – we found they also contribute to our frame of knowledge within the BCDSS of what strong asymmetrical dependency may have been, or may still be. All these individual examples of language use create realities. It is our aim at the BCDSS to take all these realities together and analyse what they have in common, and if there may be realities that are pertinent for most societies and that we can describe in terms that can be understood throughout the variety of disciplines and periods we work with.

This workshop showed us that it is indeed possible to find a common language of analysis which a majority of us can agree upon as useful.

The proceedings of the workshop will be published as an edited volume in the BCDSS' book series *Beyond Slavery and Freedom*, published with de Gruyter, Berlin. All contributors agreed to participate. The volume will be edited by Jeannine Bischoff and Stephan Conermann.

We all stay tuned to add to our findings insights from the next Research Area A Workshop on "Narratives of Strong Asymmetrical Dependencies", organized by Marion Gymnich and Elke Brüggen. Unfortunately, we will have to wait a little longer, as this workshop has to be postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.



Jeannine Bischoff

is the Managing Director of the BCDSS and is currently focusing her research on Tibetan administrative documents concerning the rural communities that were attached to Kundeling monastery, in Central Tibet, before 1959. The peasants living on these estates had a serf-like legal status binding them to *Kundeling* monastery. She is member of the European Labour History Network and the German Tibetan Cultural Society.

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

<https://tinyurl.com/dependent-magazine>

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OTHER SUBJECTS AND PERSPECTIVES FROM THE BCDSS

Over the coming years, the BCDSS will continue to publish information about its current research projects on its website, and to provide background information on subjects related to the overall topic of dependency. BCDSS scholars will also comment on social developments from their own perspectives. In the "Interviews" section, they talk about the conditions of their work, new methods and the changing nature of research communication.

THE BONN CENTER FOR DEPENDENCY AND SLAVERY STUDIES (BCDSS)

The Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) hosts the Cluster of Excellence "Beyond Slavery and Freedom", which aims to overcome the binary opposition of "slavery versus freedom". For that we approach the phenomenon of slavery and other types of strong asymmetrical dependencies (e.g. debt bondage, convict labor, tributary labor, servitude, serfdom, and domestic work as well as forms of wage labor and various types of patronage) from methodologically and theoretically distinct perspectives.

The research cluster is part of the framework of the Excellence Strategy of the Federal Government and the *Länder* and is free and independent in the selection and realization of its research projects.

Our Cluster of Excellence is a joint project of scholars from the fields of Anthropology, Archaeology, History, Law, Literary Studies, Area Studies (including The History of the Islamic World, Japanese and Chinese Studies, Tibetan Studies), Sociology and Theology. We propose "strong asymmetrical dependency" as a new key concept that includes all forms of bondage across time and space.



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