

Activity/Task: Graduate Seminar Course for the SLAFNET Network

Period: 3-24 March 2018

Location: University of Birmingham, School of History and Cultures, Department of African Studies and Anthropology (DASA)

Organizers: scientific convenor: Benedetta Rossi, b.rossi@bham.ac.uk; organization and support: Tessa Pijnaker, TXP723@student.bham.ac.uk

Slavery and Emancipation in Twentieth Century Africa

Birmingham will be receiving a number of researchers and secondees in the context of the EU-funded SLAFNET RISE Network in the period 3-24 March 2018. The activities that will take place in DASA during this period are aimed at contributing to the overall objectives of SLAFNET as described in SLAFNET's original project document. The present program is composed of four sections: (A) summary timetable of all activities planned for 3-24 March; (B) course organization and suggested readings (please note that the readings are all available in a Dropbox folder); (C) course rationale and further readings; (D) information on the SLAFNET network.

A. Summary timetable of activities in Birmingham, 3-24 March

3-4 March 2017: arrival in Birmingham African secondees.

Monday 5 March 2017

- (10-12 noon, Arts Building main lobby) meet Michelle Devereux who will accompany African secondees to Security to get their Birmingham ID cards and then to the Library to get their passwords, and will give them a small tour of the campus along the way. The African secondees should please bring their passports and UK visas with them. Once the secondees have their ID card they will need to register at the Main Library for library access, this will be at the Main Library desk on the ground floor, they will have an ADF account so they will be able to access electronic resources for the duration of the visit.
- Welcome lunch for course participants, introduction to DASA department staff and graduate students (1-2pm Fage Library)
- **Seminar 1 (2-4pm, Styles Room): General introduction: periodisations, concepts, definitions**

Tuesday 6 March

- Introduction to Africa-focused library resources and databases accessible at the University of Birmingham with Susan Stevens, African Studies specialist librarian – Susan will collect the secondees in the main library lobby and take them up to the 4th floor (Main Library Training Room, 4th floor, 2-3pm)
- Introduction to the Cadbury Research Library (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/cadbury/archives/about.aspx>) and Church Missionary Society archives (Chamberlain Seminar Room, Cadbury Research Library, Muirhead Tower, 3.15-4.30pm)

Wednesday 7 March

- **Seminar 2 (2-4pm, Fage Library): Early abolitions in the 19th Century**
- 4.30pm Africa Talks (**Danford Room**) optional: drinks and dinner with DASA staff and students afterwards)

Friday 9 March

- **Seminar 3 (2-4pm Fage Library): Exit, voice, and loyalty: the options of (ex-)slaves, 1900-1946**

Monday 12 March

- **Seminar 4 (2-4pm, Styles Room): Managing African labour: end of forced labor, birth of development, and establishment of apartheid, 1946-1960**

Wednesday 14 March

- **Seminar 5 (2-4pm, Rodney Hilton Library): From independence to the formation of African anti-slavery NGOs, 1960-1990**
- 4.30pm Africa Talks (optional: drinks and dinner with DASA staff and students afterwards)

Friday 16 March

- **Seminar 6 (2-4pm, Fage Library): Sexual slavery and forced marriage in contemporary African wars**
- **Dinner with researchers of CHIBOW ITN Project** (details TBC)

Mon 19 - Tue 20 Workshop with invited speakers at UoB (Danford Room)

Monday 19 March: all day (see separate programme)

Keynote Lecture (Mon 19, 5pm): Rachel Jean-Baptiste (UC Davis), "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity: Métis and Claims to/of French Citizenship in Twentieth Century Colonial Francophone Africa." Chair: Benedetta Rossi (DASA)

Tuesday 20 March: all day (see separate programme)

Documentary screening (Tue 20, 5pm): Irene Kamaratou (DASA PhD) will introduce the screening of the documentary she realized with a group of Greek researchers on refugees in Greece, entitled "Ήταν Ένα Μικρό Καράβι" ('It was a small boat'), 2016. Chair: Gerasimos Tsourapas (POLISIS)

Wednesday 21 March

- **Seminar 7 – conclusion (2-4pm, Fage Library)**
- 4.30pm Africa Talks (optional: drinks and dinner with DASA staff and students afterwards)

22-23 March, international Conference in Newcastle on public slaves (optional).

Vijaya Teelock (speaker), Ahmadou Sehou (speaker), and Benedetta Rossi (discussant) are confirmed participants from our team.

More information on this conference can be found at the following link:

<https://clahnewcastle.wordpress.com/2017/03/08/the-servi-publici-everybodys-slaves-spes-project/>

B. Course organization and suggested readings

Course organisation, seminar questions and suggested readings

At the beginning of each seminar Benedetta Rossi will provide an introduction to the topic and to the debates in the literature. We will then have an open discussion. Participants can draw from their previous knowledge and research on the topic, as well as from the readings suggested for each session, which raise issues relevant to the seminar's theme (readings have been made available in advance. If you need access to them, please contact Tessa Pijnaker, TXP723@student.bham.ac.uk).

Seminar 1: General introduction: periodisations, concepts, definitions

How is slavery defined in international law today, how did this definition develop historically, and is it useful for understanding slavery and analogous practices in African societies? I will introduce the institutional and legal framework for dealing with slavery as it developed in the twentieth century. Is a definition of slavery that emphasises 'control tantamount to possession' and the notion of ownership of (enslaved) individuals, useful for research on African slavery? To what extent has this understanding of slavery been appropriated by different African actors, and with what consequences?

MacGaffey, Wyatt. "Kongo Slavery Remembered by Themselves: Texts from 1915." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2008, pp. 55–76.

Bullard, Alice. "From Colonization to Globalization: The Vicissitudes of Slavery in Mauritania (De La Colonisation à La Mondialisation. Les Vicissitudes de L'esclavage En Mauritanie)." *Cahiers D'Études Africaines*, vol. 45, no. 179/180, 2005, pp. 751–769.

Thioub, Ibrahima. "Regard Critique sur les Lectures Africaines de l'Esclavage et de la Traite Atlantique." In: Mandé, Issiaka et Blandine Stefanson (éds.), *Les Historiens Africains et la Mondialisation: Actes du 3e Congrès International des Historiens Africains (Bamako, 2001)* (Paris, Karthala 2005), pp. 271–292.

Seminar 2: Early abolitions in the 19th Century

The temporal and geographical frameworks of the early 19th century abolitions will be introduced, followed by a discussion of the strategies of different groups and individuals involved in these processes. When, how, and why did enslaved and/or free Africans begin to challenge the legitimacy of slavery as an institution? How did African slaves and slave-owners relate to European abolitionism? When, if at all, did they develop anti-slavery discourses and ideas? Did enslaved African men and women develop different strategies? How, if at all, did gender influence abolitionism and responses to it?

Greene, Sandra E. "Minority Voices: Abolitionism in West Africa." *Slavery & Abolition*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2015, pp. 642–661.

Brivio, A. "'I Am a Slave Not a Wife': Slave Women in Post-Proclamation Gold Coast (Ghana)." *Gender & History*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2017, pp. 31–47.

Botte, Roger. "L'esclavage Africain Après L'abolition De 1848: Servitude et Droit Du Sol." *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, vol. 55, no. 5, 2000, pp. 1009–1037.

Seminar 3: Exit, voice, and loyalty: the options of (ex-)slaves, 1900-1940

In most of Africa the legal status of slavery was abolished at the beginning of the 20th century. Did legal abolition lead to the emancipation of slaves? What were the options of different groups of enslaved persons? What forms of social and economic mobility were available to different categories of former slaves in different African regions? What challenges did they face?

Maxwell, David. "Freed Slaves, Missionaries, and Respectability: The Expansion of the Christian Frontier from Angola to Belgian Congo." *The Journal of African History*, vol. 54, 2013, pp. 79–102.

Rossi, Benedetta. "Periodizing the End of Slavery: Colonial Law, the League of Nations, and Slave Resistance in the Nigerien Sahel, 1920s-1930s." *Les Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, vol. 72, no. 4, forthcoming 2018.

French version: Rossi, Benedetta. "Périodiser la Fin de l'Esclavage: Le Droit Colonial, la Société des Nations et la Résistance des Esclaves dans le Sahel Nigérien, 1920-1930." *Les Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, vol. 72, no. 4, forthcoming 2018.

Seminar 4: Managing African labour: end of forced labor, birth of development, and establishment of apartheid, 1940-2000

Frederick Cooper has argued that many aspects of colonial rule underwent significant transformations following World War Two. In most African countries this was a time when de facto slavery had largely died out, although it continued to exist for some groups in circumscribed regions that operated as 'semi-autonomous social fields'. However many African workers were unfree, and remained so after the passing of the ILO Forced Labor Convention (1930), which marked an important threshold in colonial labour management. What, if any, were the institutional and historical continuities between regimes of slavery and regimes of unfree labour? How can 'unfree labour' be defined, analytically? What forms did unfree labour take? How was it legitimated (and by whom)? How was it challenged and resisted (and by whom)? What happened to slavery and anti-slavery?

Whyte, Christine. "Everyone Knows that Laws Bring the Greatest Benefits to Mankind': The Global and Local Origins of Anti-Slavery in Abyssinia, 1880–1942." *Slavery & Abolition*, vol. 35, no. 4, 2014, pp. 652-669.

Rossi, Benedetta. "What 'Development' Does to Work." *International Labour and Working-Class History*, vol. 92, 2017, pp. 7–23.

Ismael Barry, "Processus de destruction du système esclavagiste et survivances de l'esclavage au Fouta Djallon (Guinée)." Focus on how Ahmed Sékou Touré addressed the 'slavery question' during his long presidency (1958-1984). Unpublished paper (TBC – I am asking Professor Barry permission to circulate this paper).

Seminar 5: From independence to the formation of African anti-slavery NGOs, 1950-2000

Returning to a theme raised in seminar 2, this seminar explores the development of African anti-slavery discourses and practices. When was African anti-slavery a struggle against slavery, and when was slavery used instrumentally to obtain financial and political support for a wide range of agendas and strategies? Are African anti-slavery struggles best described as forms of extraversion? How, if at all, do recent African anti-slavery struggles differ from their African and European antecedents?

Peterson, Derek R. "Introduction: Abolitionism and Political Thought in Britain and East Africa." In: Ibidem (ed.), *Abolitionism and Imperialism in Britain, Africa, and the Atlantic* (Ohio 2010), pp. 1–37.

Hahonou, Eric Komlavi. "Slavery and Politics: Stigma, Decentralisation and Political Representation in Niger and Benin." In: Benedetta Rossi (ed.), *Reconfiguring Slavery: West African Trajectories* (Liverpool 2009), pp. 152–181.

Pelckmans, Lotte et Christine Hardung. « La question de l'esclavage en Afrique: Politisation et mobilisations » *Politique Africaine*, vol. 4, no. 140, 2015, pp. 5–22.

Tidjani-Alou, Mahaman. "Démocratie, exclusion sociale et quête de citoyenneté : cas de l'association Timidria au Niger." *Journal des Africanistes*, vol. 70, no. 1-2, 2000, pp. 173-195.

Seminar 6: Sexual slavery and forced marriage in contemporary African wars, 1960-2018

A wide range of researchers, activists, legal specialists, and commentators qualify as 'slavery' the massive abductions leading to captivity and forced sexuality in recent African conflicts. But not everyone agrees with this interpretation. Positions are divided between, on the one hand, perspectives that blame gender discrimination in African institutions and 'culture', and on the other perspectives

that blame activists and humanitarian organizations for imposing their allegedly 'Western' representations and agendas on African societies. Authors taking the latter position blame some humanitarian agencies for producing an image of African backwardness that is reminiscent of colonial discourse and instrumental to the entrenchment of Western control over African societies, including its most intimate spheres. Who interprets these phenomena as slavery? Who doesn't? What are the consequences of different interpretations/ representations? What do you see as the underlying causes of these phenomena, and of the heated debate over their interpretation?

Breton-Le Goff, Gaëlle. "Ending Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo." *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, vol. 34, no. 1, 2010, pp. 13–40.

Hynd, Stacey. "To Be Taken as a Wife Is a Form of Death." In: Bunting, Annie, Benjamin N. Lawrance and Richard L. Roberts (eds.), *Marriage by Force? Contestation over Consent and Coercion in Africa* (Ohio 2016), pp. 292-312.

Réseau des Femmes pour un Développement Associatif, Réseau des Femmes pour la Défense des Droits et la Paix, et International Alert, *Le Corps des Femmes Comme Champ de Bataille Durant la Guerre en République Démocratique du Congo Violences sexuelles contre les femmes et les filles au Sud-Kivu (1996-2003)* (London 2004).

Seminar 7: Studying slavery and its aftermaths

Where do we go from here? What are the current challenges and opportunities for researchers working on slavery and its legacies in Africa? What methods are being advocated? What type of sources and forms of evidence can be productively explored for future research? Who sees slavery as a present reality – either the latest reconfiguration of a long historical process, or a new phenomenon (modern slavery)? Who would rather talk of post-slavery in present-day Africa? Who sees slavery as a 'useless past'? Who sees it as a 'productive past'? How would you explain these positions? How do African researchers negotiate their writings while being perceived, and perceiving themselves, as 'positioned' in the social imaginary of their contemporaries (see N'Gaïde)? How do you situate your work within these debates, and why?

Bellagamba, Alice. "Yesterday and Today: Studying African Slavery, the Slave Trade and their Legacies through Oral Sources." In: Bellagamba, Alice, Sandra Greene, and Martin Klein (eds.) *African Voices on Slavery and the Slave Trade*. (Cambridge: 2016) pp. 174-197.

Becker, Felicitas. "Female seclusion in the aftermath of slavery on the southern swahili coast: Transformations of slavery in unexpected places." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 48, no. 2, 2015, pp. 209-230.

N'Gaïde, Abderrahmane. "Stéréotypes et Imaginaires Sociaux en Milieu Haalpulaar. Classer, Stigmatiser et Toiser (Stereotypes and Social Imagery among the Haalpulaar: Classifying, Stigmatizing and Teasing)." *Cahiers D'Études Africaines*, vol. 43, no. 172, 2003, pp. 707–738.

C. Slavery and Emancipation in Twentieth Century Africa

Course rationale

In most of Africa slavery was only abolished at the beginning of the XX century. Enduring legacies of slavery continue to affect social hierarchies and labor relations, and sexual slavery has been widespread in recent African wars. In spite of legal abolition and the criminalization of slavery in most African countries, emancipation has been happening slowly: it has been slower in some regions than others, and harder to attain for women than for men. Today the historiography of African Slavery and emancipation is a rich field of research that includes detailed regional studies. This course will examine case studies from different African regions and countries. It will shift the research focus away from a chronology of legal abolitionism, and toward the experience of slavery and emancipation of enslaved men and women. This shift of focus has two consequences. First, it problematizes the teleological assumption that in Africa the end of slavery was an inevitable, if sometimes slow, consequence of colonial legal abolition. We will interrogate the simultaneous co-existence of abolitionist ideologies and worldviews in which slavery is seen as integral to the constitution of society. Second, it forces us to rethink conventional criteria used to periodize the 'end of slavery'. European abolitionism did not always function as an enabling factor for African emancipation. And laws – colonial, national, international, and 'customary' - are not the only factors influencing the demise or endurance of (illegal) slavery. The course will explore political and economic circumstances that result in a continuing demand for enslaved persons today; and/or influence the ability of vulnerable groups to resist enslavement and other less extreme forms of exploitation and unfreedom.

Aims and Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the participating early-stage researchers should be able to:

- Understand and critique some of the main debates on slavery and emancipation in XX Century Africa.
- Situate twentieth century emancipation within a longer chronological framework, contextualizing XX Century emancipations in the long-term history of transformations of slavery in different African regions and societies.
- Analyze the relationship between specific regional case studies and broader historiographical questions.
- Acquire awareness of the sources and methods used by scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds.

Preparatory/introductory readings

The following texts provide a general introduction to the course. More readings will be made available before the beginning of the course.

Articles

The following four articles raise questions and stimulate reflections in view of the course.

Cooper, Frederick. 2000. 'Conditions analogous to slavery: Imperialism and free labour ideology in Africa'. In Cooper, Frederick, Thomas Holt, and Rebecca Scott. eds. *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, pp. 107-149. [Attached to email].

Thioub, Ibrahima, 2005. "Regard critique sur les lectures africaines de l'esclavage et de la traite atlantique." In *Les Historiens africains et la mondialisation*, edited by Issiaka Mandé and Blandine Stefanson. Paris: Karthala. [English translation attached to email].

Rossi, Benedetta, 2015. 'African Post-Slavery: A History of the Future'. *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 48, no. 2, pp. 303-324. You can download this at the following link:
<https://benedetarossi.com/publications/>

Pelckmans, Lotte, and Hardung, Christine. 2015. Numéro spécial de Politique Africaine, sur *Post-esclavage et Mobilisations*: voire Introduction et articles de Marie Pierre Ballarin et Marco Gardini. L'Introduction peut être consultée gratuitement en ligne: <https://www.cairn.info/revue-politique-africaine-2015-4-page-5.htm>

Books

This is a very general list of some of the main studies of slavery in colonial and post-colonial Africa. I will provide a much more extensive list in the autumn. But if any of the researchers wishes to start doing some general introductory readings that will be useful toward the training course in March 2018, any of the books below will be relevant.

Cooper, Frederick, Thomas Holt, and Rebecca Scott. 2000. *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. [Especially introduction and chapter by Frederick Cooper].

Lovejoy, Paul. 1983. *Transformations in slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Third edition: 2011].

Miers, Sue, and Richard Roberts. 1988. *The End of Slavery in Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Klein, Martin, and Claire Robertson. 1983. *Women and Slavery in Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Klein, Martin, and Sue Miers. 1999. *Slavery and Colonial Rule in Africa*. London: Frank Cass.

Klein, Martin. 1998. *Slavery and Colonial Rule in French West Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rossi, Benedetta, ed. 2009. *Reconfiguring Slavery: West African Trajectories*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press [2nd edition: 2016].

Campbell, Gwyn, ed. 2005. *Abolition and Its Aftermath in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia*. Milton Park, Abingdon: Routledge.

Wright, Marcia. *Strategies of Slaves and Women: Life Histories from East/Central Africa*. New York: Lilian Barber Press, 1993.

Dooling, Wayne. 2007. *Slavery, Emancipation, and Colonial Rule in South Africa*. Scottsville: University of Kwazulu-Natal Press.

Villasante-de Beauvais, Mariella. 2000. *Groupes Serviles au Sahara*. Paris: CNRS Editions.

Lovejoy, Paul, and Jan Hogendorn. 1993. *Slow Death for Slavery. The Course of Abolition for Northern Nigeria, 1897-1936*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

D. The SLAFNET Network

Setting up an international research network dedicated to the legacy of slavery in Africa and Europe: such is the purpose of the SLAFNET research project coordinated by the IRD. Funded by the European Commission, it brings together a multidisciplinary team of some 50 researchers in a consortium of 13 partners from the North and South.

For three years, SLAFNET will promote synergy between European and African teams on the social dynamics resulting from the abolition of slavery until the present.

The project will mobilise over 50 researchers in France, Kenya, Mauritius, Cameroun, Ethiopia, Senegal, Germany, Portugal and the UK to:

- Understand post-slavery issues relating to citizenship, marginalisation and injustice in Africa and European societies;
- Analyse the dialectics between commemorating and obliterating slavery;
- Initiate consideration of the process of integrating this in the heritage on both an individual and a national scale;
- Create an inventory of databases of existing resources on slavery in the Atlantic and Western Indian Oceans.

SLAFNET's 13 partners will undertake research in three areas: training, research and valorisation, to promote and support cooperation among researchers and institutions on both, reinforcing support for young African and European researchers and developing new synergies with the academic world and non-academics.

Partners

Europe: Institut de Recherche pour le Développement, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and Université de Nantes (France), Bath Spa University and University of Birmingham (Royaume-Uni), Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa (Portugal), Universitaet Hamburg (Allemagne).

Africa: Catholic University of Eastern Africa and National Museums of Kenya (Kenya), University of Mauritius (Ile Maurice), Université de Yaoundé 1 (Cameroun), Addis Ababa University (Ethiopie), Université Cheich Anta-Diop (Sénégal).

Network website: <https://slafnet.hypotheses.org/>

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