

Call for contributions to a special number

## « Gender in Slave and Post-Emancipation Societies in Global Contexts »

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*Esclavages & Post~Esclavages / Slaveries & Post~Slaveries*

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**Deadline for the submission of summaries: December 5, 2022**

**Deadline for the submission of articles: February 28, 2023**

This issue seeks to use gender as a category of analysis to compare and contrast global histories of slavery and their legacies. The last two decades have witnessed an uptick in the production of scholarly literature concerning enslaved, emancipated, and free women in slave societies in the Atlantic World. More recently, scholars have also begun to examine femininity and masculinity, including sexual violence committed against enslaved men and boys (Vainfas 2014, Aidoo 2018, Foster 2019), nonbinary gender expression (Snorton 2017), nonnormative sexualities and the family as a window for understanding the creation and maintenance of these societies. In this special issue, the editors will build on and extend this work by focusing on gender, as an analytical frame and category, in slave and post-emancipation societies beyond and/or in comparison with the Atlantic basin. In seeking scholarship sited geographically and chronologically outside of the “Atlantic world” context, we seek “to narrate differentiated histories of slavery, while maintaining a continued attentiveness to the epistemological hegemony of the Atlantic model” (Arondekar 2016: 153). We prioritize gender to better understand the conventions that define personhood and shape sexuality and the family in slave and post-emancipation societies. Gender is an important component of how enslavability, slave status, and the legacies of slavery are experienced by individuals and communities. As Judith Butler noted, “gender is not always constituted coherently or consistently in different historical contexts, and...gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities” (Butler 1990: 6). This issue calls attention to the contingencies and contextual factors that shape gender norms and identities in slave societies beyond the geographies and temporalities of the Atlantic world. The editors welcome submissions that include (but are not limited to) research articles, biographies, literature review essays, methodological essays, and appraisals of archives and sources.

Gender emerged as a critical category of analysis at the intersection of post-structuralism, postmodernism, and a third wave feminism informed by black, queer, and international feminists. These theoretical (re)framings combined to destabilize sexed binaries and dismantle universalistic assumptions about womanhood. They also drew attention to the hegemony of patriarchy, capitalism and white supremacy in producing gendered subjects. Gender came to be understood as “a primary field within which or by means of which power is articulated” (Scott 1988: 45). As gender became a critical field of inquiry, scholars also called attention to intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989), and critiqued the “ethnocentric universalism” in the production of “third-world” women, and assumptions about gender relations outside of the “West” (Mohanty 1988). Oyèrónké Oyèwùmí echoed Mohanty’s critique and then argued for decoupling gender and biology so that we can better understand how forces of universalism, facilitated by colonialism and globalization, have attempted to make sexed and gendered binaries uniform and “natural.” In more recent years, scholars have devoted new energy to denaturalizing and disassociating gender from its “one-dimensional modern European association with binary sexual difference” (Sinha 2012: 358). Emphasizing gender as an expansive category of analysis allows us to reconsider the history of sexuality, denaturalizing “underlying assumptions about the universality of the hetero/homo divide” (Mitra 2020: 8), and opening up new avenues for including both non-binary gender and so-called “deviant” and “divergent” sexualities in the history of slavery in comparative and global contexts.

Slavery has existed in a multitude of forms from antiquity to the present and on virtually every continent. The transatlantic slave trade and its legacies have long dominated research on slavery. This body of work has expanded historiographical debates and has produced multidisciplinary and intersectional frameworks through which to historicize slave societies and better understand identity, personhood, and sexuality. In studies of the Atlantic world, gender has become a crucial axis by means of which to examine slavery in relation to legal theory, liberalism, religious jurisprudence and practice, and political economy among other concepts. Scholars have mobilized and refined this premise to portray how slave owners and the people they enslaved contested the terms and manifestation of gendered domination (Morgan 2004, Jones-Rogers 2019). Within studies of slave societies, scholars employ gender analysis to recast histories of labor, biological reproduction, kinship, heteronormativity, religious authority, intimacy, violence, etc. (Aidoo 2018, Vidal 2019, Johnson 2020, Morgan 2021). The production of historical knowledge, the assemblage of the archive, and its inherent silences reveal the operation of gendered authority and the discursive power in slave societies (Fuentes 2016, White 2019). The lens of gender and sexuality has provided new opportunities to understand the world being built and to imagine the future of enslaved and formerly enslaved populations (Peabody 2017, Semley 2017, Félix & Larcher 2018). The historiography on gender and slavery outside of the “Atlantic world” context is growing (Chatterjee 1999, Zilfi 2010, Jones 2011, Hua 2014, Gordon & Hain 2017, Argit 2020, Herzog 2021), and a new volume on the global history of slavery insists on the central role of gender in contexts dating back to antiquity. (Rossi 2021, Perry *et al*, 2021).

The editors welcome contributions that engage with the following:

- Theorizations of the dynamic intersection of gender and slavery, as well as historiographical overviews of related subjects.
- The production of epistemic knowledge surrounding slavery and gender, in and beyond the archive.
- Methodological analysis of sources, which include written sources, digital databases, oral traditions, archaeology, material production, etc.
- Centering the historical experiences of enslaved people through intersectional analysis.
- Analysis of gendered norms, gendered roles, and sexuality within slave societies.
- Gender in relation to biological or social reproduction within slave societies and post-slavery societies.
- Examination of gender in slave societies co-constituted by the violent processes of colonialism, imperialism, militarization, immigration, genocide, environmental degradation, etc.
- The gendered legacies of slavery among free(d) people or broadly in post-emancipation societies.
- Examination of the gendered manner in which local, national, and international actors produce public history and collective memory concerning slavery.
- The use of gendered analysis to engage in comparative examples of slavery across chronologies and geographies.

### Guidelines for submissions

Short summaries of proposed articles (**500-800 words**) must be sent by **December 5, 2022** to [ciresc.redaction@cnrs.fr](mailto:ciresc.redaction@cnrs.fr).

The articles themselves (45,000 characters maximum, inclusive of spaces and bibliography), which may be written in French, English, Spanish or Portuguese, must be submitted by **February 28, 2023**. They should be accompanied by an abstract of no more than 3,600 characters inclusive of spaces. Comprehensive guidance for authors is accessible [here](#).

The selected articles will be published in the journal *Esclavages & post~esclavages/Slaveries & Post~Slaveries* in November 2023.

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