

Empire, Sovereignty, and Labor in the Age of Global Abolition

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

October 15-16, 2020

CALL FOR PAPERS:

This international workshop brings together scholars in consideration of the entangled and global histories of empire and labor in the age of slavery's abolition. Global abolition processes that gained prominence in the wake of the Haitian Revolution, the end of the British slave trade, and the rise of the Spanish American anti-slavery republics were accompanied by the emergence of new forms of dependency and unfree labor. We seek to better understand the significance of these transformations through a focus that moves beyond a study of nation-states and toward a focus upon the global circulation of ideas and people.

Questions of continuity and disruption within labor regimes remain essential to comprehending the full implications of the rise of liberalism, nationalism, and abolitionism itself. The workshop will be open to scholars who seek to explore and challenge canonical views that rely upon a master narrative of abolitionism as foundational in the formation of freedom. We particularly seek to highlight scholarship that represents a growing scholarly trend that reconsiders relationships between imperial formations, the suppression of the slave trade and slavery, and the (re) invention of regimes of forced labor in the long nineteenth century.

Toward this end, this two-day workshop will feature panel presentations in which participants will offer brief comments contextualizing their pre-circulated papers (which audience members will have read beforehand) followed by commentary and discussion. We will also have an evening keynote lecture by a scholar whose work highlights the urgency and implications of these questions. The event will end with a concluding roundtable that will provide an assessment of the discussions held during this two-day conference and outline an agenda for the historiography of global abolitionism.

Important dates:

- The deadline for submissions is **30 September 2019**.
- Applicants will be contacted by **22 November 2019**.
- Formal papers will be due for pre-circulation by **15 August 2020**.

If you wish to propose a paper, please submit a brief abstract (500 words max) and a short C.V. to mceas@ccat.sas.upenn.edu. Proposals for panels should include these materials for each participant, as well as a brief description of the overarching concerns of the panel.

Some funding is available to offset the costs of travel and lodging for conference participants. Details about this support will be available after submissions are reviewed.

Organizing committee:

Kathleen Brown (University of Pennsylvania); Keila Grinberg (UNIRIO); Marcela Echeverri (Yale University); Roquinaldo Ferreira (University of Pennsylvania); Sarah Gronningsater (University of Pennsylvania); and Zach Sell (Brown University)

Please direct all questions to mceas@ccat.sas.upenn.edu.