



Call for papers/Intro 'Reading & Narrating Post-slavery'

Pelckmans, Lotte

Published in:
Esclavages et post-esclavages / Slaveries and post-slaveries

Publication date:
2021

Citation for published version (APA):
Pelckmans, L. (2021). Call for papers/Intro 'Reading & Narrating Post-slavery'. Manuscript in preparation.

Call for papers special issue journal Slavery & Post-slavery nr.4, 2021.

Reading and Narrating Post-Slavery

-Mads Anders Baggesgaard & Lotte Pelckmans, Aarhus University, Denmark-

The term post-slavery has come into vogue as a catch-all for the complex timeline following the presumed abolition of slavery. In this special issue we wish to explore and question the concept through a focus on (textual) narratives of slavery, e.g. in literature, online (activist) platforms, human rights documentation, newspaper articles, pamphlets and theatre plays. We welcome both historical contributions on narratives of slavery following the abolition of slavery, as well as contributions demonstrating how past and present narratives have been used over time or are being used today.

Much like the term post-colonial, post-slavery is often not only used to analytically distinguish between the temporal rupture before and after (=post) slavery, but it also came to represent a critical, normative and moral rupture, which exposes '*the continuing legacies of a state of affairs that should have ended*' (Rossi 2015), which is arguably '*neo-abolitionist in intent*.' This unilinear, neo-abolitionist bias reinforces representations in which the temporal rupture from slavery to post-slavery is universally desirable and possible, and thereby risks to analytically turn a blind eye to the contemporary coevalness (Fabian 1990) of slavery and post-slavery. This becomes especially apparent in societies where the colonial abolition of slavery and/or international anti-slavery interventions have been and often continue to be seen as undesirable, romantic, exotic or even instrumental paternalistic projects from outside, mingling with and imposed on regional (e.g. West African) power balances.

In order to generate more room for the coexistence of both the fragmented and normative representations of (post-) slavery, this special issue calls for contributions exposing the polyphony, or even cacophony in historical or contemporary post-slavery narratives around the world. We explicitly invite contributions that draw attention to voices from the 'Global South Atlantic' (Bystrom & Slaughter 2018) supplementing the already very visible European and North American slavery and neoslave narratives.

We invite contributions that engage with

- The understanding and theorization of the contemporary historiography of slavery in relation to narrative and literature including the topics of post-slavery, re-memory, and neo-slave narratives.

- Literary and narrative reflections on contemporary and late-modern forms of slavery (indentured labour, human trafficking, refugee deportation, etc.) and their relationship to imperial and traditional forms of slavery, e.g. in Asia.
- Texts that deal with the histories of different forms of slavery and their relationship with processes of abolition, e.g. in African societies.
- The different historical uses of the memory of slavery in e.g. Caribbean and Latin American societies and literatures after abolition.
- The use of (legal) archives, texts and databases in claims for reparations as a form of narrative and discursive genre (and modern practice) shaping (and reinforcing) ideas of post-slavery.
- Testimonies from a variety of slavery-like conditions in post-slavery societies ranging from racial exclusion, indentured labour to human trafficking and xenophobia in e.g. Europe.
- The impact and/or (un-)intended consequences and genres resulting from a global human rights-isation and humanitarian-isation of neo/(post-)slave narratives
- The literary implications of less studied post-slavery or (neo-)slave narratives: Muslim slave narratives, female slave narratives, white versus black post-slave narratives etc.
- Narratives that move away from imperialist, essentialist representations/ topoi of the post-slave subject, e.g. in alternative ideological traditions such as afrofuturism, communism, orthodox Islam, etc.

References

Rossi, B. (2015) African Post-Slavery: A History of the Future. *International Journal of African Historical Studies* (48: 2): pp. 303-325.

Bystrom, K. & J.R. Slaughter (eds.) (2018) *The Global South Atlantic*. New York: Fordham University Press.

Fabian, J. (1990) *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Sharpe, C. (2011) *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Publication Calendar (updated)

1 November 2019: Submission of article proposals (abstract), to the editors of the issue: madsbaggesgaard@cc.au.dk and Pelckmans@hum.ku.dk.

The proposal can be written in either French or English and must present the paper in approximately 4,000 characters (with spaces), or about 500 words (about one page), including:

- a title, an abstract detailing the research question, the theoretical framework, and the main results, plus authors' first names and last names, their status, and their institutional affiliation, as well as the corresponding author's email address.

- bibliographical references are not included in the character count.

15 December 2019: The preselected authors will be notified by the editors

15 March 2020: Submission of first drafts, respecting the journal's guidelines for authors

June 2020: Feedback from the peer review evaluation process

15 October 2020: Final papers are expected

Spring 2021: Publication of the special issue