



## International Conference

### Slavery in Africa Knowledge and Openings

Yaounde University, Cameroon  
19, 20 & 21 April 2022

#### Organizing Institutions:

- Unité de Recherche Migrations & Sociétés (URMIS, Institut de Recherche pour le Développement / Université Côte d'Azur), France
- Centre d'Études et de Recherches Pluridisciplinaires sur l'Esclavage et les Traites en Afrique (CERPETA), Université de Yaoundé I - Université de Maroua, Cameroun
- Centre Africain de Recherches sur les Traites et les Esclavages (CARTE) – Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, Sénégal
- Centre de recherches en histoire internationale et atlantique (CRHIA), Université de Nantes, France
- Centre for Research on Slavery and Indenture (CRSI), Le Réduit, University of Mauritius
- Centre International de Recherche sur les Esclavages (CIRES), CNRS, Paris, France
- Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, Bonn, Allemagne
- Centre for History of the University of Lisbon, Lisbonne, Portugal
- Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopie
- The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya
- The National Museums of Kenya, Mombasa, Kenya
- The University of Birmingham, Birmingham, Grande Bretagne
- Bath Spa University, Bath Spa, Grande Bretagne
- CELCFAAM-Centre d'Études en Littératures et Cultures franco-afro-américaines, Université d'Etat de Feira de Santana, Brésil
- Kingdom
- Bath Spa University, Bath Spa, United Kingdom

Research on slavery in Africa has benefited from a clear dynamism in recent years, supported, partly, by international research programmes as well as by the publication of many works of reference. Some previously little-studied regions (such as Cameroon, Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa) have been the subject of new research; themes which had previously been secondary (such as the abolition of slavery or the social stigmatisation inherited from slavery) have become central; comparative perspectives have been raised across the whole continent and the adjacent islands (Zanzibar, Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius) and specific fields have taken on a new dimension (such as the museography of slavery, reconnection or the question of reparations). The historic importance of slavery in Africa, its weight in the social relations maintained by





various sectors of society and in the construction of contemporary nation states are well established. But these questions are often sensitive and very contemporary, they are sometimes the subject of public controversy, or reduced to silence. In the light of the momentum behind this knowledge produced on slavery in Africa, the issue here is to take stock of the latest advances, so that they can be transmitted to the general public, in school and academics teachings, and in activities led with the civil society.

The international conference to which our institutions invite researchers and teachers is intended to contribute to this assessment of knowledge about slavery in Africa and to take stock of the most recent significant scientific advances. Eight years after the conference "Slavery in Africa: Past, Legacies and Present," (SLAFCO) held at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (Nairobi, 2014), this initiative benefits from the work developed in the European project, "Slavery in Africa: A Dialogue Between Europe and Africa," (SLAFNET, H2020 RISE, 2017-2022), as well as from a scientific ecosystem enriched by several collective initiatives. With an approach promoting interdisciplinary scientific dialogue (history, anthropology, sociology, museology) and dialogue with civil society (through the attendance of anti-slavery associations), the ambition here is to continue efforts to break down barriers between the various regions of the African continent, their historiographies and their stakeholders.

## **General Presentation of the Themes of the Conference:**

### 1. Citizenship, Marginalisation and Injustices

The comparative analysis of social, political and economic experiences of the descendants of slaves in contemporary African societies reveals the stigmatisation, marginalisation and political under-representation from which they suffer. The origins of many current conflicts are found in the history of slavery and otherness (ethnic, racial or else) associated with them. In some countries, the activism of descendants of slaves contributes to a change of attitudes, but in others, silence continues to cover trauma which has become intergenerational. The ideal of shared citizenship is sometimes undermined by demands for justice and compensation which expose the fractures located at the heart of the social fabric and of national and international policies.

### 2. Sources, Social Memories and Self-Narratives

Documenting the pervasiveness of slavery, the discontinuities in its practices as well as its consequences is a central concern for researchers. Collecting and preserving oral sources, archaeology, written and iconographic sources, and life stories are all elements which allow scientific work to be produced. But these are also elements which structure or influence social memories, the ways in which individuals and societies represent their perceptions of work (gendered, forced, migrant), of ancestry (such as relation to family origins), autochthony (such as the relationship with territory and geographical origins) and a sense of belonging (such as the relationship with a group or nation).

### 3. Heritage Issues, Museums and Restitutions

Sites, objects and cultures linked to slavery are sometimes marginalised in national memory; they are sometimes on display in museums and form part (or not) of a shared experience. Are they becoming tools to raise awareness, promoting dialogue between former masters and slaves or their descendants? Artifacts are used as a means for starting dialogue between generations and between divergent memories, but they are also at the heart of persistent demands and political issues which sometimes go well beyond them.





#### 4. Digital Humanities and Slavery

Several databases on slavery and the slave trade in Africa, the Western Indian Ocean and the Atlantic already exist. The inventory of sources (names of people and places, life stories, linguistic and economic variability, terminologies) deployed by these databases, their accessibility and technical questions related to their use (press, confidentiality, general conditions, legal notices, etc.) are all central questions. Today's issue is about developing tools which facilitate a complete analysis of data and the development of common policies for managing this data so it can be put to best use.

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### How to Submit

The deadline for submission of paper and panel abstracts is **15 January 2022**.

*Individual papers:* please submit a summary of 1500 characters (including spaces) in French and in English, as well as biographical information indicating institutional affiliation and a complete address.

*Panels:* please submit a panel proposition with 3 or 4 presenters with a summary (2500 characters, including spaces) as well as the titles and abstracts of papers, and biographical details of all the presenters.

Proposals are to be done on a template you can upload and post on the following platform :

<https://slafco2.sciencesconf.org/user/submissions?forward-action=submissions&forward-controller=user&lang=en>

For further information, please contact [slafco2@sciencesconf.org](mailto:slafco2@sciencesconf.org)

The scientific committee will make a selection by **30 January 2022**. Papers of a maximum length of 50,000 characters (Times 12 or equivalent, including spaces, notes and bibliography) must reach the organisers before **31 March 2022**.

### Organisation of the Conference

The conference will take place at the University of Yaoundé 1 in Cameroon; accommodation venues will be suggested for participants. In addition to the usual circuits, all useful information for participants will be available on the blog below: <https://slafco2.sciencesconf.org/> from January 2022.

All speakers must ensure that they have the necessary finance to take part in the conference. A limited budget will be dedicated to supporting the participation of some junior African researchers. A request form for financial assistance will be posted online on the conference blog.

Anti-slavery activists will be invited to discuss their commitments, with the scientists, as well as their expectations vis-à-vis African research. Screening of a documentary film on slavery and the slave trade in Africa as well as the presentation of the book produced with the material of the previous SLAFCO conference (2014) will be on the conference agenda.





The health context in Cameroon does not pose any particular problem for holding this conference. As of 15 November 2021, a negative test from less than 72 hours before boarding and a quick test on arrival are required, in addition to an invitation to comply with barrier measures. Participants will be regularly informed about how the situation is developing.

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### Organizing Committee

- Marie Pierre Ballarin (URMIS – IRD, Nice)
- Edouard Bokagne Betobo (Département d’Histoire, Université Yaoundé 1)
- Giulia Bonacci (URMIS – IRD, Nice)
- Klara Boyer-Rossol (Ciresc Paris- Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies Bonn)
- Stephan Conermann (Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, Bonn)
- Myriam Cottias (CNRS- CIRESC, Paris)
- Colette Essono (IRD Yaounde)
- Alban Fournier (URMIS-CNRS, Nice)
- Joseph Fumtim (IRD Yaounde)
- Moussa II (Département d’Histoire, Université de Yaoundé 1)
- Benedetta Rossi (AFRAB project, University College London, Londres)
- Ahmadou Sehou (CERPETA – Centre d’Études et de recherches Pluridisciplinaires sur les Traites en Afrique, Université de Maroua)
- Joseph Jules Sinang (CERPETA – Centre d’Études et de recherches Pluridisciplinaires sur les Traites en Afrique, Université de Yaoundé 1)
- Vijaya Teelock (CRSI - Centre for Research on Slavery and Indenture, Université de Mauritius, Le Réduit)

### Honorary Committee

- Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, Professeure émérite, Université de Paris, France
- Chouki El Hamel, State Arizona University, USA
- Martin Klein, Professeur Émérite, Université de Toronto, Canada
- Paul Lovejoy, York University, Canada
- Iftikhar Malik, Bath Spa University, Grande Bretagne
- Alioum Idrissou, Université de Maroua, Cameroun
- Maurice Aurelien Sosso, Université de Yaoundé 1, Cameroun
- Ibrahima Tioub, Recteur Honoraire de l’Université Cheik Anta Diop, Dakar, Senegal

### Scientific Committee

- Patrick Abungu, National Museums of Kenya, Mombasa, Kenya
- Antonio Almeida Mendes, CRHIA, Université de Nantes, France
- Myriam Cottias, CIRESC-CNRS, Paris, France
- Marie Pierre Ballarin, IRD, Urmis, Nice, France





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- Ahmed Hassan, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopie
- Herman Kiriama, Kisii University, Kenya
- Chétima Melchisedek, York University, Canada / Université de Maroua, Cameroun
- Alexander Meckelburg, University College London, Grande Bretagne
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- Marie Rodet, SOAS, Londres, Grande Bretagne
- Eugenia Rodrigues, Centre for History of the University of Lisbon, Portugal
- José Damião Rodrigues, Centre for History of the University of Lisbon, Portugal
- Benedetta Rossi, University College London, Londres, Grande Bretagne
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- Ahmadou Sehou, Université de Maroua, Cameroun
- Joseph Jules Sinang, Université de Yaoundé 1, Cameroun
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- Stéphanie Tamby, Intercontinental Slavery Museum, Port Louis, Maurice
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- Salah Trabelsi, Université de Lyon 2, France

