



Call for papers

SISLAV Seminar 2018

University of Turin, Italy, 21-22 September 2018

Co-existence and interaction between free and unfree labour:

The workers' perspective

Throughout history and at all latitudes, multiple labour relations have played a role in the processes of labour extraction and commodification: wage labour, slavery, servitude, tributary labour, convict labour, etc. During the last decades a broad debate has developed around the issue of the co-existence and interaction of free and unfree labour relations, and about the very boundaries of “freedom” and labour coercion. A rich collection of empirical research has resulted, which has contributed to question traditional postulates of labour history, including the centrality of the Industrial Revolution, the process of proletarianization, and the concept and boundary of the working class.

With a few exceptions, however, this new scholarship has featured two major limitations. On the one hand, it has focused more on the abstract entanglements between labour relations than on the concrete interaction among workers (and their organizations). On the other hand, it has developed largely in separation from those labour studies which, especially for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have addressed the role of the workers' organizations, practices and political cultures, and their relationship with the State.

The SISLAV Seminar 2018 seeks to foreground the perspective of the workers who were imbricated in distinct and co-existing labour relations. Moreover, it aims to integrate the viewpoint on labour relations with that of the experiences, ideas and organizations of the workers themselves.

We invite paper proposals on any world region, about the period included between the thirteenth and the twenty-first centuries, and with a focus on at least one of the three following aspects:

1. The co-existence and interaction, *within the same work-place*, of workers imbricated in different labour relations. Here we adopt a broad definition of work-place, including among others: factories and arsenals, galleys and punitive institutions, mines and fields; the household, the army and the sites of sex work.
2. The co-existence *in the life of the same worker* of multiple work experiences imbricated in distinct labour relations. We invite to think both in terms of: synchronic co-existence, for example in the case of an independent peasant who was simultaneously employed as factory worker; and diachronic co-existence, for example when a slave was employed as wage labourer or sharecropped after his/her emancipation. The proposal can focus on individuals or groups of workers, whose work-related trajectories are addressed by the proponents. The workers' trajectory across labour relations can also be investigated in connection with the workers' spatial mobility (i.e. migration).
3. The *solidarity and conflict among workers imbricated in different labour relations, and the relationships among their organizations*. For example, we are interested in papers which address: the way slaves' brotherhoods and wage labourers' associations/unions interacted; how the First International or the IWW looked at the question of forced labour; and the way convicts and soldiers mobilized jointly in certain contexts. Equally welcome is a focus on the conflicts which developed among workers imbricated in different labour relations, especially when it allows to highlight the perceptions that each group of workers had of its own status, and of the status of other groups.

The SISLAV Seminar 2018 will be held at the **University of Turin, Italy, on 21 and 22 September 2018**.

Italian, English, French and Spanish can be used during the seminar. The paper proposals can be submitted in one of the above mentioned languages.

The proposals should be submitted to the mail address seminariosislav@gmail.com by 1 March 2018. They should include the name, surname, position and affiliation of the proponent, and the title and abstract of the proposal (**max 300 words**). MA students, PhD students and candidates, researchers and professors (on temporary or permanent contracts) in history, social sciences and anthropology can submit a proposal.

The outcome of the selection will be communicated by **mid-April 2018**, and the programme will be published in the month of **May 2018** on the website www.storialavoro.it

The Organizing Committee:

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