

## **Traces of the Slave Trade in the Holy Roman Empire and its Successor States: Discourses, Practices, and Objects, 1500-1850**

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Type:

Conference

Date:

November 20, 2018

Location:

Germany

Subject Fields:

Black History / Studies, Early Modern History and Period Studies, German History / Studies, Modern European History / Studies, Slavery

### **Traces of the Slave Trade in the Holy Roman Empire and its Successor States: Discourses, Practices, and Objects, 1500-1850**

**University of Bremen**

**30.11.-02.12.2018**

#### **Organizers**

Prof. Dr. Rebekka von Mallinckrodt

Dr. Josef Köstlbauer

Dr. Sarah Lentz

#### **Contact**

german-slavery@uni-bremen.de

#### **Conference Venue**

Haus der Wissenschaft

Sandstraße 4/5

28195 Bremen

Recent research has increasingly highlighted the economic and personal involvement of German actors in the early modern slave trade. Merchants, shipowners, sailors, and doctors from the Holy Roman Empire and its successor states organized the purchase and transport of enslaved people to the colonial zones of other powers. The textiles, metal, and glass industries produced goods for the slave trade. At the same time, aristocratic households in the Holy Roman Empire used so-called "court moors" as servants and for representative purposes. The financial, material, and human effects of the slave trade thus extended from the zones of colonial rule deep into the territories of the Holy Roman Empire (see e.g., Weber 2009, Kuhlmann-Smirnov 2013, Rosenhaft/

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Brahm 2016).

Continuing and expanding this research, the conference will explore the discourses, practices, and material objects that testify to slavery and the slave trade in the Holy Roman Empire. This concerns the trafficking of people who were—even in the Old Empire—regarded by some owners as slaves and explicitly described as such (Mallinckrodt 2016 and 2017). It also concerns the discursive engagement with slavery and the slave trade, which for the above-mentioned reasons should not only be seen in its function as a proxy discourse, i.e., as criticism of other forms of unfreedom (Lentz 2016). And third, it concerns the material goods that were exchanged for slaves or that were made from slave labor. With regard to these three fields of research, one of the main aims of the conference is to bring together scholarship that has thus far largely been local in focus and to highlight the systematic character of the involvement of the Holy Roman Empire in the Atlantic slave trade as well as in other systems of slavery. The focus on slavery and the slave trade deliberately intends to direct attention away from possible representative purposes (and thus the owners' perspective), and looks instead at the journeys of trafficked people into the Holy Roman Empire as well as the economic side of human trafficking, and—whenever possible—at the experiences of the trafficked individuals themselves.

The conference is organized and funded as part of the ERC project „The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation and its Slaves“ (Nr. 641110).

<https://www.frueheneuzeit.uni-bremen.de/index.php/en/research/german-slavery>

Guests are welcome! Please register by email to [german-slavery@uni-bremen.de](mailto:german-slavery@uni-bremen.de). Registration deadline is Nov. 20th, 2018.

Please note that most presentations will be in German, the publication will be in English.

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### Friday, November 30, 2018

**14:30**            **Arrival**

**15:00**            **Welcome** (Josef Köstlbauer/ Sarah Lentz/ Rebekka v. Mallinckrodt)

**15:30-16:15**    **Keynote Lecture Klaus Weber** (Frankfurt/ O.): Asking Different Questions: The Atlantic Plantation Economies and the Holy Roman Empire

16:15-16:30    coffee break

**16:30-18:00**    **Section I: Of Things Said and Unsaid - Discourses; Chair & Comment: Heike Raphael-Hernandez (Würzburg)**

16:30-17:15    **Craig Koslofsky** (Illinois): Scholars, Slaves, and Epidermalization in the Holy Roman Empire, 1600-1750

17:15-18:00    **Mark Häberlein** (Bamberg): Africans, Slavery and the Slave Trade in Gottlieb Tobias Wilhelm's *Unterhaltungen über den Menschen* [Conversations on Human Mankind] (1804)

### Saturday, December 01, 2018

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**09:30-12:15 Section II: Practices of Enslavement & Practices of Protest; Chair & Comment: Eve Rosenhaft (Liverpool)**

09:30-10:15 **Arne Spohr** (Bowling Green): Violence against Black Bodies in Early Modern Germany: The Case of Black Trumpeter Christian Real (ca. 1643-after 1674)

10:15-11:00 **Walter Sauer** (Vienna): From Purchasing Slaves to Ransoming Children. Comparing Aristocratic and Bourgeois Recruitment Practices of Exotic Personnel in Habsburg Austria

11:00-11:30 coffee break

11:30-12:15 **Sarah Lentz** (Bremen): "No Ship From Hamburg or Germany is Involved in the Slave Trade." The Public Controversy Following the Seizure of German Ships for Alleged Involvement in the Slave Trade

12:30-14:00 lunch break

**14:00-16:45 Section III: Writing as a Practice - the Moravian Case; Chair & Comment: Gisela Mettele (Jena)**

14:00-14:45 **Josef Köstlbauer** (Bremen): Slavery, Servitude, and Representation: Writing About Unfree Non-Europeans in 18th Century Moravian Sources

14:45-15:30 **Jessica Cronshagen** (Oldenburg): "We Don't Need any Slaves, We Have Oxen and Horses ...". Letters from Moravian Schools in Europe to the Slaves' Children in Paramaribo (1829)

15:30-16:00 coffee break

16:00-16:45 **Jan Hüsgen** (Dresden): The Moravian Mission and Continental Anti-Slavery Sentiments

**Sunday, December 02, 2018****09:30-12:15 Sektion IV: The Visible and the Invisible - Goods, Objects, Modes of Representation; Chair & Comment: Roberto Zaugg (Bern)**

09:30-10:15 **Jutta Wimpler** (Frankfurt/ O.): American Drugs and Dyestuffs in Central Europe: Invisible Products of Slavery?

10:15-11:00 **Carolyn Alff** (Hamburg): Kings as "Slaves" or Warriors as "Slaves"? Emergence and Reception of Images depicting "Slaves" in Early Modern Germany

11:00-11:30 coffee break

11:30-12:15 **Rebekka v. Mallinckrodt** (Bremen): Slave Collars in the Holy Roman Empire. Iconography and the Law

12:30-14:00 lunch break

14:00-15:00 final discussion & information regarding the conference publication

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