



UNIVERSITÉ DE NANTES



**CALL FOR PAPERS  
DOCTORAL STUDENTS AND POST-DOCS**

**Freedoms and Slaveries in the Atlantic World  
(14th-20th c.)**

**Supporting:**

**Participation of junior scholars  
Promoting their research**

**Research Programme STARACO, University of Nantes (France)  
Summer Programme at Nantes**

The STARACO project (*STatus, 'Race' and Colour in the Atlantic World from Antiquity to the Present*), financed by the French Region Pays de la Loire, is offering support for doctoral students and post-docs (from Europe, Africa and the Americas) to participate in the Summer Programme in Nantes from 22-26 June 2015 on the subject "Freedoms and Slaveries in the Atlantic World."

This project is organized by Antonio de Almeida Mendes, Associate Professor in Early Modern history and Clément Thibaud, Associate Professor in Modern history.

**Conference Focus**

Today, bibliography on the phenomenon of slavery in the Atlantic is incredibly vast. However, our research group on the definition of hierarchies of colours and of 'races' cannot avoid addressing this subject. It is clear that the deportation of millions of African captives towards the Americas constituted the most powerful impetus for the racialisation of slavery, leading to the 'natural' representation according to which all slaves are black. This simple equation, however, covers over a complex historical process that this research conference seeks to analyze more closely. We must begin by 'denaturalizing' the concept of slavery. The term slavery, in fact, includes situations that are very different in time and space, which the

various specialists in our research network will be able to compare. This is why we use the word ‘slaveries’ in the plural. The diversity of slaveries mirrors that of the modes of liberation and the various statuses that freedom generated. Here, the goal is to show that slavery does not respond to a single definition, but rather describes a process. Similarly, coming out of a servile condition led to the creation of various statuses, ranging from full access to equal citizenship (in modern times) to certain situations of minority, for people who could no longer be identified as slaves but still carried its stigma in freedom. The condition of slave was certainly a status, but it was also a state that could, within certain limits and under certain conditions, be negotiated in social practice. In this perspective, the problem of abolitionism and its ambiguities may be explored through the implicit renewals of forms of slavery in the nineteenth century, beyond the legal abolition of that particular institution.

The ANR research programme "Afrodescendants et esclavages: domination, identification et héritages dans les Amériques (15<sup>ème</sup>-21<sup>ème</sup> siècles) [Afro-descendants and Slaveries: Domination, Identification and Legacies in the Americas (15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> c.)]" and the European 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme, "Slave Trade, Slavery Abolition and their Legacies in European Histories and Identities" have enabled the phenomena of slavery and the slave trade to be studied in a globalised manner. The STARACO project focuses on analysing the notion of freedom in European, African and American societies where slaves represented an important minority. In particular, we will examine the centrality of slavery and other forms of forced labour in societies in which there is a large graduated scale of dependence. Subjectivity and the evolution of the condition of ‘free’ will also be questioned. In Europe, these notions are closely linked to the status of ‘freedmen’ and ‘freed’ in society.

On the Iberian Peninsula, the successful integration of descendants of African slaves has affected the definition of naturality namely the status of individuals born in a territory and the rights associated with that status. The advent of multicultural societies ultimately led to a dissociation between nationality and citizenship. The ‘purity’ or ‘impurity’ of the blood of one’s ancestors and the non-Christian origin of the founder of one’s lineage accompanied the creation of discriminatory policies to exclude entire groups of the Iberian population from political rights on a juridical basis and to imprison them in a condition dependency. Legitimization of sub-citizenship status because of ‘impure’ lineage or having unfree ancestors led to the construction of new identities in relation to nation, race, colour, and religion. Thus, this summer programme will examine the relativity of the concept of ‘free’ in Europe, Africa and the Americas. ‘Free’ people may have been the majority or the minority depending on the society; the rights associated with that status were not the same in Ancien Regime European societies, in multiethnic African societies, or in colonial societies of the Americas. Comparing and contrasting the various research areas of scholars in the STARACO project and combining different historiographical traditions will enable us to examine the fragility of the concept of freedom and the multiple forms of slavery.

### **Submission Conditions**

Paper proposals must be submitted in one of the Summer Programme’s working languages (English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese). The papers selected will then be reviewed and commented on by senior researchers. The ability to understand French is preferable.

### **Funding Requirements**

Doctoral students and post-docs whose proposals have been selected are expected to attend all group activities organised at the Summer Programme from 22-26 June 2015. In exchange, the

STARACO project will pay for costs of transportation, lodging (5 nights) and meals (breakfast, lunch, and two dinners).

### **Selection Committee**

The two project coordinators, Antonio de Almeida Mendes, Associate Professor in Early Modern history and Clément Thibaud, Associate Professor in Modern history, will select the research projects.

### **Schedule and Application Deadlines**

- Publication of the Call for Papers: October 2014
- Deadline for Submitting Paper Proposals: 15 February 2015
- Response: 1 March 2015

Please send an application of a detailed curriculum vitae and a paper proposal (1 page maximum) by email to [staraco@univ-nantes.fr](mailto:staraco@univ-nantes.fr)