

Department of Human Sciences "Riccardo Massa"

Department of Sociology and Social Research

SWAB – Shadows of Slavery in West Africa and Beyond. A Historical Anthropology ERC Grant
Agreement 313737

International Workshop

Racial legacies

Historical and contemporary dynamics in Africa and the Middle East

7 November 2017



Anti-racist campaign 2014 Morocco

In recent times, growing public and media attention to “racism” and racial prejudices against sub-Saharan Africans and African slave descendants in Africa and the Middle East has opened societal and political debates on the issue of “anti-black racism.” To what extent are current anti-racist movements and debates able to capture the complexity and multiplicity of the experience of “blackness”? How is “blackness” embodied, experienced, represented, and contested by different social actors (e.g. slave descendants of African origins, *haratin*, Sub-Saharan African migrants, students or professionals)? What histories and vocabularies are mobilized to raise public awareness and attain political goals? How is “race,” with its complex relations with ideas of “colour,” “origin,” “blood” and “descent,” locally conceptualized? How do the shadows of slavery overlap, and interweave, with contemporary socio-political dynamics? How can we think of the relation between current expressions of “racism” and historical experiences of racial slavery?

With this workshop, we aim to unpack the “racial issue” in different post-slavery contexts in Africa and the Middle East, by interrogating its connections with local histories of slavery and their contemporary legacies. Bringing together scholars working on “race” in a variety of settings, we hope to develop a fresh discussion on the complex intersections of historical and present dynamics shaping contemporary forms of “blackness,” black identities and belonging; cultural and artistic expressions; racial discrimination and activism based on specific constructions of “race.”

Programme

Morning: Aula Pagani, Building U7 3^o floor

- 9:00 – 9:15 *Welcome & Opening*—Prof. Alice Bellagamba & Prof. Giampaolo Nuvolati, University of Milano Bicocca
- 9:15 – 9:30 *Racial legacies and contemporary predicaments*
Introduction by Laura Menin, University of Milano-Bicocca
- 9:30 – 10:30 *Reading Race in Africa & the Middle East*
Open Lecture by Prof. Bruce Hall, University of California, Berkeley
Discussion
- 10:30 –10:45 Coffee break
- 10:45– 11:30 *Afro-Qataris: Identity and Belonging*
Aliou Manjang, Qatar University
Response: Marco Gardini, Università Milano Bicocca
- 11:30 – 12:15 *Are Haratines black Moors or just black? IRA Mauritanie and the “racialization” of the anti-slavery struggle*
Giuseppe Maimone, COSMICA
Response: Alice Bellagamba, Università Milano Bicocca
- 12:15 – 14:00 Lunch break

Afternoon: Aula “R. Massa”, Building U6- 4^o floor

- 14:15 – 15:00 *Arb’ain. Racial dynamics in Iran*
Parisa Vaziri, University of California, Irvine
Response: Alessandra Brivio, Università Milano Bicocca
- 15:00 – 15:45 *“Black people, white hearts:” race, colour and descent in contemporary Yemen*
Luca Nevola, University of Milano Bicocca
Response: Luca Ciabbari, Università di Milano
- 15:45 – 16:00 Coffee break
- 16:00 – 16:45 *Meanings of blackness in Tunisia. Race and slavery in a Southern slave descendants’ community*
Marta Scaglioni, University of Bayreuth/SWAB
Response: Ismael Montana, Northern Illinois University
- 16:45 – 17:30 *“Dans la peau d’un noir”: Senegalese students and young professionals in Rabat, Morocco*
Laura Menin, University of Milano Bicocca
Response: Valerio Colosio, University of Sussex
- 17:30 – 18:00 Closing comments – Ismael Montana
Open discussion
- All welcome!

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