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Journal of Historical Sociology Imperial Plantations Past and Present

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In this special issue, we seek to stage an interdisciplinary conversation between the past and the present in order to engage the enduring logics of plantation systems. While keeping in mind that historical plantations have conditioned those of today, attention to contemporary plantation systems shows that the plantation is no artifact of old empires. We are looking for essays that engage plantations' global reach, even when the object of study is as local as a particular plantation. Editors: Piya Chatterjee, Women's Studies, University of California-Riverside; Monisha Das Gupta, Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies, University of Hawai'i at Manoa; Richard Cullen Rath, History, University of Hawai'i at Manoa.

We welcome submissions from all regions that have been profoundly changed by plantations including but not limited to eastern Africa, southern and southeastern Asia, the Americas, or plantation islands (whether in the Caribbean, the West African coast, the Indian Ocean, or the Pacific). We invite essays that think beyond area studies and nationalist frameworks. In this issue, we conceive of plantation economies and societies as bringing together multiple diasporas and staging encounters between indigenous people and immigrants. Of particular interest to us are papers that consider conquest from indigenous perspectives while marking land appropriation as necessary to the development of the plantation complex.

Submissions might investigate the connections, disjunctures, and interplay among various racialized/ethnic groups as well as consumers and producers; multi-disciplinary approaches linking cultural processes such as diaspora and creolization; or the effects of supra-national structures like the World Bank and programs for structural adjustment on labor and commodity circuits. We would like to see the papers track shifts in labor regimes and consumption patterns over time rather than considering them in isolation.

Millions of workers continue to labor within racialized, gendered, and sexual economies of the plantation from which the past is difficult to extricate. Essays might consider colonial, neo-colonial, and post-colonial plantations as carceral economies geared toward rendering labor predictable through everyday and extraordinary violence. We would like to foreground analyses that treat race and gender as intersecting systems of violence. We also seek papers that investigate
how plantations carry ideologies such as race, caste, patriarchal gender roles, heteronormativity, or religion around the globe. What relations of power do plantations carry with them and how are they transformed in the process? We are looking for the ways that consumption simultaneously fetishizes and erases the laboring bodies who produce plantation commodities. What fantasies of consumerism erase the corporeality of the product consumed? How does capitalism both connect and isolate labor, plantation infrastructures, and consumers? By connecting cultures of mass consumerism to cultures of production, we seek to bridge the artificial divides of metropole and periphery, global and local. How do memory and memorialization -- for example in nostalgic recreations of plantations as tourist sites -- erase or minimize the realities of historic and present-day plantations? In sum, we want this special issue to trace how historical and contemporary plantations manifest the global circuits of labor, commodities, and consumption.

Please send an abstract of 250 words by January 10, 2008 to jhscfp@way.net. If you already have a paper, please send it to the same address along with the abstract. The final articles should be 7,500-10,000 words. While we encourage authors to use images for their articles, they have to high resolution jpg, tiff or pdf files. The issue is slated for publication in January or February 2009 (volume 21, issue 4). Direct any questions about the special issue to the above address. Natalie D. A. Bennett, PhD., Assistant Professor, Women's & Gender Studies, DePaul University, Byrne Hall, 4th Floor, 2219 N. Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614-4412; phone: 773.325.4047; fax: 773.325.4412; edress: nbennet1@depaul.edu; web: www.depaul.edu/~wms.