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The meanings of wage labor in a slave society from a gender perspective in nineteenth-century Brazil

Abstract:

In this presentation, I will examine a series of lawsuits initiated by women who worked in retail stores against their employers in different legal contexts throughout the nineteenth century in Rio de Janeiro. In particular, I will contrast the diversity of arguments employed in each case by the litigants, exploring the role of the intersections of race, class/ethnicity and gender to understand how these freed and free single women tried, in court, to prove that their work deserved to be paid by salaries in the hegemonic presence of slavery and dependency. The aim is to deepen our comprehension of the gendered and racialized meanings of waged labor under slavery in its final decades, and how the process of legal codification affected women's labor claims.

Bio:

Fabiane Popinigis (PhD University of Campinas – UNICAMP, 2003) is associate professor at the History Department of the Rural Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRRJ) and coordinator of the graduate program in History at the same University. Her research interests include history of slavery and freedom, labor history and the relationship between race, gender and class. Her latest publications include: with TERRA, Paulo Cruz, "Classe, raça e a história social do trabalho no Brasil (2001-2016)," in *Estudos Históricos*, Rio de Janeiro, 32, no. 66 (2019): 307-328; with LIMA, Henrique Espada, "Maids, Clerks, and the Shifting Landscape of Labor Relations in Rio de Janeiro, 1830s-1880s," in *International Review of social history*, 1 (2018): 1-29; ""Trabajo, libertad y esclavitud: estrategias y negociaciones en el sur de Brasil, siglo XIX," in *Trashumante. Revista Americana De Historia Social*, 6 (2015): 146-168.