

AGE EAA SESSION ON “GENDER AND COLONIALISM”

Theme: The archaeology of material culture, bodies and landscapes

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Keywords: Colonialism, Gender, Materialities, Daily life

This session aims to discuss the effects that different types of colonial domination had on different local sex/gender systems. Colonialism brought into co-existence groups of people with different sex/gender systems in the framework of asymmetrical relations of power. It thus frequently altered and/or disrupted natives' gender understandings that were incompatible with those brought and imposed by colonial powers.

Focus will be on the role that material culture and the body played in these colonial processes in relation to gender. We will welcome contributions that reflect on how gender transformations were performed and implemented on the ground, and what they entailed for the people who experienced them. Topics include (but are not limited to) the re-structuration of living spaces, children's socialization, food systems, dress, kinship, healing practices, belief systems and sexuality.

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Abstracts for session #170

GENDER AND COLONIALISM. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE 2018 AGE SESSION

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In this paper, the co-organizers of the 2018 EAA AGE Session will explain why this year AGE has selected the topic of Gender and Colonialism to be explored at the 2018 EAA Annual Meeting in Barcelona. In addition, they will present the AGE (Archaeology and Gender in Europe) to those assistants to the session that are not familiarized with it. As one of its main goals, the AGE community seeks to create a meeting place and a discussion platform for scholars interested in gender and feminist studies in archaeology and related disciplines. This year, we will discuss the effects that different processes of colonial domination had on different local sex/gender systems. In congruence with previous AGE sessions, we will cross spatial and temporal boundaries to reunite scholars that investigate how gender transformations were performed and implemented on the ground in areas both culturally and geographically distant. Our contributions encompass situations that range from the impact that New Kingdom Egypt had on Nubia and the Spanish Empire had on different areas of the Atlantic and the Pacific, to diaporic or colonial contexts in the ancient Mediterranean such as the Balearic Islands and northeast Catalonia. Issues related to colonality of knowledge and how they affect our interpretation of the past will be also covered.

Keywords

Gender

Colonialism

Ancient Mediterranean

GENDER RELATIONS IN COLONIAL PERIPHERIES: THE POSTALAYOTIC SOCIETY AS A CASE STUDY (S.VI-II A.C./BALEARIC ISLANDS, SPAIN)

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The role played by the Punic colonial power in shaping Postalayotic society is still controversial. Since the arrival of the Phoenicians in Ibiza, the contacts between the communities that inhabited the neighboring islands have had a variable character, oscillating between an apparent isolation or resistance in the first place, to a later immersion in the commercial area directed from the Punic city of Ybshim/Ebusus. In any case, towards the middle of the 6th century a.C., an important social fracture is detected in which undoubtedly the Punic colonial interests were an accelerator. Within the framework of these profound socio-economic changes that took place in Mallorca and Menorca, encompassed by the Postalayotic period (550-123 BC), the structure of society was also affected at its foundations: domestic groups and their relationships, especially in terms of gender.

The domestic and funerary materiality, supported by some written testimonies available in classical sources, are the basis for understanding the gender and their interrelations in the Balearic postalayotic. The transcendental role played by women in the organization and structure of the group, as well as in its socialization, especially in childhood, will be observed. Men, on the other hand, will consolidate as fundamental pieces in the bosom of incipient patriarchal groups. To this panorama will be added the direct consequences of the Punic colonial contact, which will bring the arrival of foreign population to the islands and also the systematic exit of a segment of the community to integrate the Punic army. Likewise, the gender relations established in the Punic orbit will be decisive in order to end up strengthening the changes initiated in these island societies and his daily life.

Keywords

Gender

Postalayotic

Colonialism

Punic

Balearic Islands

“HE IS LOOKING AT BOWMEN LIKE WOMEN”: ANCIENT EGYPTIAN GENDERING OF NUBIANS DURING THE NEW KINGDOM

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During the New Kingdom (c. 1550 – 1077 BC) Egypt has established state control over Nubia (modern south Egypt and north Sudan) through military campaigns against the kingdom of Kush, with its capital in Kerma, and other local polities in the region. Although being in contact with the region since the fourth millennium BC, after the control over it has been established in the New Kingdom, Egyptians become increasingly present in Nubia and Nubians become more prominent in Egyptian iconography. This paper will examine New Kingdom Egyptian textual and iconographic sources on Nubians from gender perspective. Through analysis of reliefs and inscriptions from temples and private tombs together with small finds with depictions of Nubians it will be argued that New Kingdom Egyptian ideology gendered Nubian men and boys as women-like and cowardly and Nubian women as hyper-sexual. Drawing on “decolonial feminism” of María Lugones (2007, 2011) the paper will explore how this ascribed constructed gender binary not only served Egyptian imperial ideology in constructing the enemy Other, but also at the same time normativised Egyptian binary gender system. Finally, the paper will consider the possibilities of exploring how Egyptian gender discourse influenced the lives of inhabitants of Nubia under the Egyptian rule.

Keywords

Egypt, Nubia, New Kingdom, ideology, gender inversion

GENDER AND MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES IN THE FIRST GLOBALIZATION. THE EXAMPLE OF COLONIAL GUAM (1668-1700)

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Colonial domination brought into co-existence groups of people with different sex/gender systems. It frequently disrupted local gender understandings incompatible with those imposed by colonial agents. In this paper, I will present one of such situations: the incorporation of Guam by the colonial network of the Spanish empire.

Understood as a “civilizing” (sensu Fanon 1952) enterprise by Jesuit missionaries, the colonization of Guam targeted from the outset gender arrangements and Maintenance Activities, a concept used in archaeology to highlight the foregrounding nature of a set of daily practices that are essential to social continuity. From the re-structuration of living spaces to children’s socialization, through food, dress, kinship, healing practices and sexuality, Jesuit missionaries aimed to dismantle native Chamorro lifeways, which were mainly organized through Maintenance Activities.

In this paper, I would like to focus on the first years of colonization, on the period known as the Spanish-Chamorro wars (roughly 1668-1700). These were the years that witnessed more conflict and dramatic changes for the Chamorro communities. My aim is to discuss the interrelationship between colonial processes, material culture and the construction of gender. Through the interpretation of Guam’s specific case, I would like to show the day-to-day of more general gender-global changes.

Keywords

Gender

Modern Colonialism

Maintenance Activities

Missions

LUCIA MIRANDA AND THE STAYS. DIFFERENT STRATEGIES FOR FEMALE GENDER SUBMISSION IN COLONIAL CONTEXTS

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During the advent of colonialism that followed the 16th century European social rules were imposed to the conquered societies. When applied to the colonies, these rules were based on an explicit notion of white supremacy, but also bring with them implicit strategies for the domination of the feminine gender. On some occasions, these strategies implied turning women into scapegoats. It happened in the case of Sancti Spiritus (Argentina), where a love story between the native chiefs and a white woman named Lucia Miranda was considered the cause of burning the Spanish fort. As it seems to be a later reification it is clearly showing how Spaniards reconstructed their history, integrating a gender based -and biased- explanation. In other cases, colonialism fueled female domination strategies undergoing in Europe. This becomes evident if we critically analyze the colonial products that were made from the 17th century onwards. The case of the colonial products, as parasols and stays, coming from the Basque fisheries of the North Atlantic makes clear how they took an active part in the colonization of women's bodies and minds. Deepening in the aforesaid aspects our contribution aims to highlight the diverse strategies for colonizing women that were developed in the context of Early Modern Colonialism.

Keywords

Women, Scapegoat, Stays, Domination

RESISTANCE AND PUNISHMENT: TEXTILE PRACTICES AMONG RECHE-MAPUCHE COMMUNITIES IN COLONIAL CHILE (16TH-19TH CENTURY)

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Spinning is a practical and embodied knowledge. Different body positions and the particular use of textile tools learnt since childhood make spinning a culturally determined practice. It demands disciplined movement, skill and concentration. The proficiency of Araucanian spinners amazed Spanish colonisers and chroniclers since their first arrival in Chile. Women were capable of spin while walking! Despite the establishment of textile factories, tailor's guilds, and laws in the Americas aiming at controlling the production and consumption of clothing, traditional textile practices and knowledge continued among indigenous communities in Chile. Spinning and weaving reinforced, particularly among the Reche-Mapuche women, technologies of the self and became technologies of resistance against the Spanish colonial rule (1540-1820). Precisely because of the importance of spinning and weaving for being and becoming a Reche-Mapuche female, those textile technologies were taught to and shared with enslaved Spanish women. Spanish captives were forced to marry indigenous leaders and to procreate with them, as well as to dress like a native woman and to carry out the female economic activities within the community, such as spinning and weaving. Through the analysis of textile tools, iconography and ethnographic accounts, this paper explores indigenous textile practices and knowledge as a conscious strategy of resistance against colonial rule on the one hand, and as a punishment and imposition onto Spanish female captives on the other.

Keywords

Spanish colonialism
Textile practices
Reche-Mapuche
Gender

EMPOWERING DAILY MEALS: GENDER, POWER AND CULTURAL ENTANGLEMENTS IN EMPÚRIES, NORTHEAST CATALONIA (5TH-4TH CENTURIES BC)

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In recent years, food, foodways and culinary traditions have become a solid line of research in the study of diasporic or colonial contexts and in the analysis of cultural contacts between migrant communities and native peoples. Despite its relevance, in Ancient Mediterranean studies these inquiries have focused mainly on consumption practices and materialities related to extraordinary foods and, particularly, Mediterranean wine. These studies have stressed out the centrality of wine ingest and the materialities associated to its service and consumption in the creation of cultural entanglements, the negotiation of power relationships and social networks as well as the politics of masculinities. On the contrary, the analysis of culinary practices, traditions and materialities related to ordinary food –such as local porridges– have been belittled in the study of cultural contact, gender ideologies, collective identities and power relationships within colonial and migrant communities. They are practices and materialities traditionally related to the domesticity and the feminine sphere, therefore considered as conservative, passive and unrelated to historical, social, economic and power dynamics. The aims of this communication are twofold. First, to call this dualism between consumption and cuisine in question, and to evidence that this duality has been mostly constructed on colonial and gender-biased perspectives. Secondly, through the study of Empúries' culinary practices and their associated materialities to highlight the active participation of ordinary food in the economic, social and identity politics of this emporion as well as to empower those people who cooked their daily meals, mostly some Ampuritan women.

Keywords

Gender

Colonialism

Foodways

Culinary practices

FIRE WITH FIRE: ETHNOSEXUAL CONFLICTS AND RESISTANCES AT THE EARLY COLONISATION OF THE MARIANA ISLANDS

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In 1668, a group of Jesuits landed in the Mariana Islands (Western Pacific) with the aim of evangelising their native inhabitants (the Chamorros). However, this contact soon became an armed clash, since some Chamorros were reluctant to adopt certain practices preached by the fathers.

The aim of this communication is two-fold: First, I will argue that sexuality (and the practices and discourses associated with it) was one of the most controversial points in that conflict. Second, I will analyse, from an archaeological, transfeminist and intersectional perspective, the role played by different materialities in the “ethnosexual conflict” between Spaniards and Chamorros. I will claim that that confrontation was articulated around two buildings, two heterotopias produced from very different sexual epistemologies: the *guma' uritao*, where young Chamorro males were initiated into adulthood, and the Jesuit school, space where Chamorro boys and girls learnt the Christian doctrine and, therefore, the European sexual standards. The recurrent burning of both buildings by members of the two sides shows both the ferocity with which the Spanish colonial agents tried to implement their evangelising and colonial project and the resistance of Chamorros themselves against such project. Following Barbara Voss, I will conclude that sexuality, far from being a “consensual” and “domestic” element of colonial encounters, in many cases received a public and even violent treatment

Keywords

Mariana Islands, Colonialism, Ethnosexual Conflict Sexuality

**MASCULINE PLACE IN LIMINAL SPACE:
ASSEMBLAGES OF PRACTICE OF ANGLO-AMERICAN SEAFARERS ON LA TORTUGA
ISLAND, VENEZUELA, 1700-1781**

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This paper foregrounds the role of 18th-century male merchant sea captains as footloose early-modern consumers and drivers of large-scale change. In this paper, Anglo-American and Bermudian captains are considered not as anonymous movers of the burgeoning British mercantile capitalist economy and agents of British colonialism, but as conscious masculine social actors navigating a new and growing array of entanglements between them and the newfangled material things being produced at the dawn of industrialization. Historical archaeological investigations carried out at the campsites of Punta Salinas, by the saltpan of the Venezuelan island of La Tortuga, and the subsequent reconstruction of the vibrant assemblages of practice of dining and drinking there, reveal that once captains began to acquire refined ceramic and glass vessels in the late 1720s and early 1730s, they never stopped. Through their maritime mobilities captains quickly became entrapped in entanglements of enabling dependence and constraining dependency with a growing array of fragile and exotic material things. These male captains not only consumed the 'fruits of empire' but also reformulated and readapted elite masculine and feminine British practices to their new social contexts, and - in the case of Punta Salinas - to a uniquely liminal and temporary campsite on an arid and uninhabited island. Middling Anglo-American and Bermudian sea captains selectively adopted refined Georgian practices, thereby restructuring the gendered practices of the urban elite, influencing British ceramics manufacture, and strategically making these practices their own in their untethered maritime world. In this way, male sea captains were at the forefront of innovating with gendered Georgian gentility beyond the home, ushering in modernity by way of the sea.

Keywords

Masculinity

Seafarers

Assemblages of Practice

Consumerism

GENDER AND AGEING IN COMPLEX SOCIETIES: FACING GENDER IN THE FUNERARY PRACTICES OF ELDERLY AT MONTE ALBAN, OAXACA, MEXICO

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In the past decades, ethnographic documents produced in the Sixteenth Century illustrating iconographic representations of the body have been consolidated as an important source of information to explore gender identity in Mesoamerican archaeology. Because these documents were published with explanations provided by the Spanish friars, the presupposition in the interpretation of these sources has ignored agency in both female and elderly status. Therefore, the differences between genders in the representations have been analysed by the archaeologists through stereotypical gender-specific elements in the construction of the appearance of the body, and they neglect mixed-gender attributions as in the case of aged bodies. These mixed-gender attributions of ageing open up the consideration of questioning Colonialism cultural assumptions about how gender and ageing intersects within the mortuary context in complex societies, when the predominance of the use of these sources is given to justify social inequality by gender and age. The goal of this paper is to study gender dimensions of ageing through the analysis of the household burials at the site of Monte Alban (500 BC-AD 1250), which was the center of a state-level society in the Oaxaca Valley during at least AD 200-850. Aged bodies were selected considering pathologies and markers of senescence, such as joint diseases, osteoporosis, traces of wear and tooth loss (n=39; 11,8%). There were no distinction between adornments and objects in the burials that could be specific by male (n=20) or female (n=19) sexed bodies. In addition, the funerary practices suggest that seniors were engaged in occupational specializations of the household and these were not gendered-specific, as ceramic production and trade of prestige goods. On the other hand, gendered processes took place in the mortuary ritual to distinguish some symbolical aspects of longevity to preserve the ancestral memory of the house.

Keywords

gender
Colonialism
Monte Alban
body