original article

esboços
histórias em contextos globais

LIMITS AND POSSIBILITIES OF A MODEL FOR THE STUDY OF SLAVERY IN THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN

Limites e possibilidades de um modelo para o estudo da escravidão no Mediterrâneo antigo

Fábio Duarte Joly [a]
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6549-3094
E-mail: fabio.joly@ufop.edu.br

José Ernesto Moura Knust [b]
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3295-9107
E-mail: zeknust@gmail.com

[a] Universidade Federal de Ouro Preto, Department of History, Mariana, MG, Brazil.

[b] Instituto Federal Fluminense, Campus Macaé, Macaé, RJ, Brazil.

DEBATE
ESCRAVIDÃO ANTIGA E HISTÓRIA GLOBAL
ANCIENT SLAVERY, AND GLOBAL HISTORY

Esboços, Florianópolis, v. 31, n. 58, p.539-557, set./dez., 2024.
ISSN 2175-7976 DOI http://doi.org/10.5007/2175-7976.2024.e105070

ABSTRACT
The aim of this article is to respond to the comments that our colleagues generously made to the text entitled “Ancient Slavery from a Mediterranean Perspective: A Proposal for a Global Approach”. We organized this response around four themes on which we believe that many of the considerations made by our colleagues converge: 1) the validity of theoretical reflections and the construction of wide-ranging historical models; 2) the relationship between global models and the agency of historical subjects and their life trajectories; 3) our relationship with Moses Finley's work, particularly his concept of "slave society"; 4) chronological divisions and the question of the temporalities of ancient Mediterranean slavery.

KEYWORDS
Ancient slavery. Roman Empire. Mediterranean.

RESUMO
O objetivo deste artigo é responder aos comentários que os e as colegas generosamente fizeram ao texto intitulado “Escravidão antiga em perspectiva mediterrânica: uma proposta de abordagem global”. Organizamos nossa resposta em torno de quatro temas para os quais consideramos que muitas das considerações feitas pelos colegas convergiam: 1) a validade de reflexões teóricas e construção de modelos históricos de grande abrangência; 2) a relação entre modelos globais e a agência dos sujeitos históricos e suas trajetórias de vida; 3) nossa relação com a contribuição de Moses Finley, particularmente com o conceito de “sociedade escravista”; 4) os recortes cronológicos e a questão das temporalidades da escravidão mediterrânica antiga.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES
Escravidão antiga. Império Romano. Mediterrâneo.

We want to thank all our colleagues for their generous consideration, criticisms, questions, and development of the ideas we presented. We are happy with the unique opportunity that this publication model gives us to rethink, rework, clarify, and correct aspects of the ideas presented in the text that initiated this dialog. Our intention in this text is not purely to defend this model against any criticisms made by the commentators but to engage in a dialog with these issues in order to think together about clarifications, adjustments, and corrections to what we proposed in the initial text - as well as to deal with some new possibilities that are not there, but which have been opened up by the responses to it. Writing this response has been particularly enriching for us, and we hope that reading this text will also be for our colleagues and the general reading public.

An exhaustive response to each of the comments would be too long. Therefore, we have organized the main themes on which our colleagues' contributions have converged to address as many issues as possible. We have identified four central themes: 1) the validity of theoretical reflections and the construction of wide-ranging historical models; 2) the relationship between global models and the agency of historical subjects and their life trajectories; 3) our relationship with Moses Finley's contribution to slavery studies, particularly with the concept of "slave society"; 4) chronological divisions and the question of the temporalities of ancient Mediterranean slavery. By addressing these four issues, we hope to deal with other more specific points that we found particularly thought-provoking. Inevitably, however, we will not be able to deal with the many other relevant issues raised by our colleagues.

THEORY AND EMPIRICISM, CONCEPTS AND MODELS

In our article, we proposed constructing a model that deals with large chronological and spatial divisions. Some of the comments rightly point out the limits and problems posed by this type of model, so we would like to start this dialog dealing with this aspect. Firstly, in very general theoretical-methodological terms, it seems fundamental to point out that we do not believe in such a rigid dichotomy between "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches, as defined by Ulrike Roth. In her commentary, she criticizes our approach for what she defines as "a desire to theorize that goes beyond (or, rather, that comes before) the research itself". She presents an opposition between the use of predefined models and theories (which she condemns since it would lead us to the error of choosing only sources that validate the previously established model) and the construction of models only based on specific empirical analyses (which she understands as the correct procedure). We agree with Roth about the risks of cherry-picking when dealing with models (of any kind, not just those on a global scale, we might add), but that does not sum up the whole issue. There is no empirical work before theory because concepts, metanarratives, methodologies, and forms always guide the choice and analysis of sources, no matter how circumscribed they seem. Marc Bloch explains that it is not a question of choices or preferences about how to act, but about how historians do their work in practice:

> Many people and even, it seems, certain authors of manuals give a surprisingly candid picture of the progress of our work. In the beginning, they would gladly say it was the documents. The historian gathers, reads, and assesses their authenticity and veracity. Then, and only then, does he put them to work... It is just unfortunate: no historian has ever done this. Even when they think they might.
> Because texts or archaeological documents, even the apparently clearest and most complacent ones, only speak when we know how to question them.

> [...] all historical research presupposes, from its first steps, that the search has a direction. In the beginning, it is the spirit. Never [in any science] has passive observation generated anything fruitful. Assuming, moreover, that it is possible.
> Let's not fool ourselves. It certainly happens that the questionnaire remains purely instinctive. However, it is there (Bloch, 2002, p. 78-79)

No historian can write History without this "questionnaire", which mobilizes assumptions that unfold in concepts and metanarratives. We write History with words that make sense because the audience understands them as concepts. Finley has rightly argued how much these concept-words deal with the construction of generalizations that determine any historiographical work from the outset (Finley, 1975). Rather than avoiding previously established concepts, which is impossible to do, historiography needs to understand its starting points, be aware of its limits and problems, and be alert to the necessary adjustments, corrections, and reformulations of such a conceptual repertoire.

As Finley himself argued (1986), the formulation of models is especially useful in this type of scrutiny, because they are powerful tools in making explicit what *a priori* appears to be implicit in the analysis. Neville Morley (2004, p. 23) also notes that "models are tools, not ends in themselves; if they fail to account for the evidence persuasively, if they seem to rest on dubious assumptions, or, most importantly, if they fail to suggest interesting new ways of thinking about the past, then they need to be replaced". One of the ways of conceiving a model is, in Morley's words, as a "template for understanding complex social and economic processes" (Morley, 2004, p. 23). Our text intends to propose a model based on a critique of some of the starting points that have constituted the field while simultaneously seeking to explain new starting points that we believe are powerful for certain types of analysis of ancient slavery.

At its core, the historiographical craft needs an empirical analysis of the concrete historical reality of which the vestiges of the past give us some glimpse. The point here is that this empirical analysis, in turn, mobilizes a series of theoretical-methodological assumptions, which we need to scrutinize as much as the historical evidence under analysis. Undoubtedly, specific empirical analyses will always have much to contribute to this scrutiny. However, we point out that texts dedicated to a theoretical reflection on these concepts, categories, and metanarratives also have their importance. There is a long tradition of this kind of theoretical text in historiography in general. The same occurs in the field of Ancient Slavery as well. The first chapter of Finley's *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* studies precisely how historically specific assumptions have shaped approaches to the subject since the 18th century. The remaining chapters of the book develop theoretical and conceptual discussions of slavery and slave society as a starting point for analyzing ancient societies based on the available evidence and the historiography of the time. As we pointed out in the text that opens this debate, the last fifteen years have been prolific in texts debating these conceptual issues that structure the study of ancient slavery, and much of our text is a search for a dialog with these contributions from which we make a new proposition.

Constructing a model based on a theoretical reflection does not imply that this proposition is produced *a novo* by theoretical reflections alone. Theoretical formulations such as the one proposed in our text can only exist in the face of the diversity of such well-established work on the subject, which has allowed such an accumulation of knowledge in the study of ancient slavery. In other words, our formulation does not arise from an abstract theory but precisely from an accumulation of studies and research that we sought to mobilize in this construction, without which we would never have been able to come close to the ideas we are proposing.

Furthermore, this (and any) model should not be taken as a straitjacket to insert the available sources *a posteriori*. On the contrary, it serves as a starting point for new empirical and theoretical analyses, which will certainly not end within the limits set by such a starting point. In addition, work carried out from other starting points has also served and will serve to put the elements of this model under analysis. Therefore, we do not intend this theoretical contribution to be made at the expense of the accumulated empirical work of various researchers who use different evidence, methodologies, and geographical and/or temporal divisions; it is just the opposite, since we intend our model to be part of a dialog with them.

Let us put this in terms of pudding, to take the famous saying recovered by Roth in her commentary. Noticing some issues in the many puddings we have eaten so far, we wondered if it was worth tinkering with important aspects of the recipe. We presented, then, a possible new recipe. It is very natural and beneficial that skilled confectioners pointed out problems and strangeness caused by this recipe. The proof of the pudding will undoubtedly be in the eating when it is finally made, but discussing the recipe seems quite useful to us since every pudding is made with a recipe - whether written down in advance, memorized, or improvised by an experienced pastry chef.

STRUCTURES AND AGENCIES, GLOBAL AND LOCAL

Having clarified this more general theoretical-methodological issue, we can move on to a more central element about the possible merits and limits of the specific type of model we are proposing. Several commentators have shown a certain discomfort that a model dealing with such vast temporal and chronological divisions could easily lose sight of the agency and experience of historical subjects, particularly the enslaved ones. Roth, for example, draws attention to the total absence of any mention of any enslaved person or enslaver in our text. This brings us to a central issue in the production of historical knowledge, the relationship between historical “structures” and “agencies”, which unfolds indirectly in questions about the global and the local and the general and the specific.

It is interesting that Marcelo Ferraro, dealing with the field of Atlantic slavery in his commentary, points out that “after decades of progress in the social history and micro-history of slavery, the events that marked the beginning of the 21st century convinced a new generation of historians to turn their eyes to the structural dimensions of captivity and to favor more ambitious spatial and temporal divisions”. Between the 1980s and 2000s, the flourishing Brazilian historiography dedicated to the History of slavery in our country produced excellent analyses of the Social History of slavery, inspired by English Social History (in particular, the work of E. P. Thompson), French History of Mentalities, North American New Cultural History and Italian Micro-History. Much of this Brazilian historiography had the explicit intention of combating an excessively structuralist vision that emanated from a scholarship that was, in their eyes, excessively theoretical, coming from Marxist circles (e.g. Chalhoub, 1990) - a formulation that resonates with Roth’s criticism of our proposal.

In a review of the historiography of Atlantic slavery, Rafael Marquese explains precisely that, during this period, Brazilian historiography dedicated to slavery has abandoned structuralist approaches

> based on the argument that being too “structuralist”, they would overlook the volitional capacity of the subaltern historical subject, i.e. his ability to shape his own destiny. [...] The prevailing response of Brazilian historiography consisted of immersing itself in a dense examination of the enslaved subjects and their worldview, cultural constructions, family strategies, and patterns of

> resistance in studies that were quite circumscribed in time and space. [...] Amid this journey, the understanding of slavery as a total social relationship, as a historical system, was eventually abandoned, and methodological nationalism reigned once again (Marquese, 2019, p. 22-23).

Marquese and Ferraro are part of a movement in Brazilian historiography that we consider extremely important and in which we look for inspiration. Without denying the importance that this Social History of Slavery has had for the study of Atlantic slavery in the last decades of the 20th century, they seek to break the restricted boundaries to which these analyses ended up being encapsulated in order to seek a more comprehensive and integrated history of slavery as a historical system. In Marquese's words:

> Rather than treating them as external and independent of each other, we should understand the slave regions subjected to observation as particular moments of the same long-term historical process, that is, of the same historical structure that forms them and is formed by them. By paying attention to the multiple mediations between the world economy and politics and local conditions (in which we highlight the agency of historical subjects), examining how spatially separated regions have conditioned each other over time will be feasible (Marquese, 2019, p. 31).

The reality of slavery in the ancient world is very different from that of the modern Atlantic, set in the context of colonialism and capitalism. However, this global perspective seems interesting to us to overcome other problems specific to Ancient History. As we point out in our text, the study of ancient slavery is tied up within boundaries imposed by a traditional morphology of Ancient History that generates its problems. Our proposal aims to think of new forms for a history of ancient slavery, specifically by proposing a model of the historical emergence of an ancient Mediterranean slave system.

Unquestionably, insightful historiography about slavery in the ancient world was built within the traditional morphology - in the same way that the Social History of Brazilian slavery produced some of the best works in all Brazilian historiography, even within the limits of methodological nationalism. Even our previous productions in the field of the History of Roman slavery were built on these guidelines, and we would like to believe that they also have their merits.

The construction of a model that is an instrument for building a new morphology of ancient slavery does not have to make a clean sweep of the field or deny the importance of studying the agency of specific historical subjects on more restricted scales. Returning to Marquese (inspired by Jean-Paul Sartre), it is necessary to "permanently move oneself between the general and the particular, between the concrete and the abstract, between the structure and the event, between the general flows of history and the sphere of biography, taken as a producer and product of its time" (Marquese, 2019, p. 31).[1] As Barbara Weinstein (2003) shows, even the most delimited and specific studies of New Cultural History had as the backdrop of their explanatory theses a grand narrative about historical processes that went beyond the geography and chronology of the empirical study in question. We can say the same about studies of the Social History of slavery in the Americas, which, therefore, have much to gain from dialogue with a field capable of producing a critical analysis of the traditional grand narratives with which these more circumscribed analyses have so far dialogued. We propose that the same dialog should take place in the study of ancient slavery and present an initial proposal for a model.

[1] A nice example of an approach in this perspective is Emilia Viotti da Costa's book on the slave rebellion in Demerara in 1823 (Costa, 1994).

An auspicious way of thinking about how this *jeux d'eschelles* works is suggested by David Lewis's comment when he cites the work of Carlo Ginzburg. As Lewis says, Microhistory is not interested in the specific *per se*, but as a microscopic analysis that allows us to see aspects of broader historical processes that are invisible at other scales. In this sense, Microhistory does not understand local as the opposite of the global, as the scale on which we glimpse the diversity that refutes the existence of broader historical processes. The local in Microhistory is the concrete realization of History, the place of individuals' agencies and experiences, but also of the concrete materialization of what we usually call structures, which are nothing more than these broad historical processes that delimit the agents' horizons of possibilities and over which they must navigate, often with minimal resources and information. As a methodology of History, therefore, Microhistory necessarily demands a history that is not micro, with which it will dialog, placing its questions under scrutiny (Grendi, 1977; Ginzburg, 2007, p. 269; Levi, 2000, p. 33-35; and Burnard, 2023, p. 5-6, advocating its use in the making of global histories of slavery).

Our model proposes reformulating the major frameworks with which more local and specific analyses will engage in this dialog. We are not proposing replacing local, micro, and subject-oriented approaches with global, macro, and structure-oriented ones. Both approaches already exist and need to continue to exist. We are proposing a new way of framing the second type of approach, which seems fruitful not only for those who want to deal with these scales but also for those who are interested in more specific approaches, as they will have new points for dialog and the development of new perspectives for their objects of analysis.

However, all the comments about the need not to lose sight of the human experience in such a broad model are not irrelevant. With the sensibility that writing history demands, Jane Webster states that "every enslaved person was exactly that: a *person*, with a unique biography". We must be careful not to lose sight of this dimension. When dealing with such an ambitious scale, there are three ways of keeping History on the ground floor, using Giovanni Levi's expression (2000, p. 25).

The first possibility lies in the dialog between the general and specific, the global and local, structure and agency. The famous formulation of Marx's *18th Brumaire* states that "men make their own history; yet they do not make it of their own free will, for it is not they who choose the circumstances under which it is made" (Marx, 2011, p. 25). Therefore, large-scale analysis can help us understand these "circumstances" under which people made History, producing tools that allow us to understand the specific concrete reality of life in which people are inescapably trapped. A global model will be as good as it can provide specific concrete studies with conceptual repertoires and information about global historical processes that help in these analyses.

The second path consists of making the model itself more permeable to the question of the agency and experience of the subalterns. Global models need not, and should not, give the monopoly of historical agency to the dominant classes or the power structures of a given society, reifying them as historical subjects. Perhaps some of our examples of how institutions of the Roman Empire were important elements in the integration of the Mediterranean slave system may have tipped the model in the direction of an elitist and structuralist view of historical movement, but this is not our intention. We fully agree with Carlos García MacGaw when he points out that we must recognize the enslaved's resistance and agency as factors in historical change.

In a text that is already relatively dated in important aspects, Joseph Vogt makes a very thought-provoking proposition about the Mediterranean connections of the slave revolts and "mass movements" occurring at the end of the second century BC, even if they always had specific and local motivations (Vogt, 1975, p. 83-92). To some extent, we can

understand these revolts as symptoms of a reorganization of the dynamics of the Mediterranean slave system, possibly linked to the emergence of a new temporality of this system. However, more than a consequence or symptom, such revolts must also be understood as a factor in the formation and transformation of the elements of the Mediterranean slave system.

In addition, it is necessary to incorporate the dynamics of subaltern life within the elements of the model in a more comprehensive way. Norberto Guarinello draws attention to the inability of our model to capture the dynamics of "slave trajectories", a concept he uses to account for the fluidity, mobility, and "zones of indeterminacy" between slavery and freedom that marked the condition of the lives of the enslaved and freed persons. There is an important gap to be filled in our model to account for this aspect. It would be interesting to incorporate questions related to the social and demographic impact of the enslaved and freed persons into the model, thinking about how they are a product of the very dynamics of the slave life trajectory, for example.

Finally, a third way to keep the agency and experience of historical agents in sight when dealing with global models is to realize that the movement of people constructs the networks of connection and integration envisioned by these models. For some years now, a field of intersection between Global History and Microhistory has been developing based on the notion of "global lives" (Trivellato, 2011), and this is undoubtedly fertile ground for this approach in the History of the Mediterranean slave system. In her commentary, Airan Oliveira Borges uses the epigraphic record to map the commercial networks through which the Heii operated as an example for us to think about the "need to identify the spaces that make up the mercantile chains, to weave the networks of sociability and to map the circulation of the agents involved based on their respective trajectories".

Regina, the freedwoman mentioned by Webster and whom we know from a funerary monument erected by her husband near the fort of Arbeia in the north of Roman Britain, could be a fascinating example of all this. We do not know how Regina was enslaved, and this may have happened, as Webster points out, within local dynamics of enslavement prior to the Roman presence, which may not have changed with the arrival of the invaders. Webster also points out that we can see an aspect of the permanence of local elements in the trajectory of Regina's life in the way her tomb carefully constructs a memory of her ethnic origins through her representation in typically British clothing. However, Regina ended up in the hands of a Syrian enslaver who was in the province of Britain because of the Roman legions' presence (either as a soldier or as a civilian living off services and trade for the soldiers). This same Syrian freed Regina at some point, married her, and, upon her death, invested significant resources to guarantee her a funerary monument with significant influence from the artistic models of the Syrian city of Palmyra (Carroll, 2012, p. 283-288).

The extent to which these events took place through local and provincial modes and practices, or models that transcended local boundaries, brought to Britain above all by its conquest by the Roman Empire, is difficult to pinpoint and will remain a matter for debate. It is indisputable, however, that each of these events that occurred in the lives of a formerly enslaved person born in southern Britain and a Syrian immigrant living near a Roman fort on the Empire's northern border only happened because of the existence of historical processes that go far beyond the local lives of these two individuals. We can understand even their mere presence in Arbeia within the framework of the existence of historical dynamics that go beyond Arbeia and the province of Britain and create specific networks of circulation of people, ideas, and goods through which these individuals traced their lives. It does not mean that each of these episodes (enslavement, manumission, marriage, burial) took place in a similar way to how these things happened in other regions of the Empire. The province of Britain had a particular dynamic of Roman presence, which materialized in

particular social dynamics. However, these particular forms are not the expression of a local life separated from an integrated world, but the local expression of dynamics connected in specific ways to supra-local systems.

For this insertion of the agency, experience, and trajectory of subaltern historical subjects into the scope of a global model such as the one we have proposed, the possibilities opened up by large projects in the field of Digital humanities that focus on the study of literary, epigraphic, and papyrological data from Antiquity for the creation of open access databases, such as the research project SLaVEgents: *Enslaved persons in the making of societies and cultures in Western Eurasia and North Africa, 1000 BCE - 300 CE*, coordinated by Kostas Vlassopoulos, are especially important. This kind of initiative will help us study local lives affected by global dynamics and the global lives of enslaved individuals.

There is much to be developed in this direction, both in specific empirical work and in producing theoretical and conceptual reflections and models to help us account for these stories.

REVISITING FINLEY IN A NEW THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Another important question in the debates proposed by the commentators is to what extent our model is, or is not, essentially an anti-Finley libel. Understandably, this can be inferred from the first paragraph of the text, when we criticize recent attempts at renewal in the field for having had difficulty in overcoming the category of “slave society”, central to what can be called a Finleyian orthodoxy in studies on ancient slavery. However, the relationship of our model to Finley’s work is more nuanced than that and explaining what we think about is important to clarify and improve the central aspects of our proposal.

In our text, we rely on Marquese’s (2024) formulation, which divides theoretical approaches to the History of Slavery into two large groups, one of which he calls structural-nomothetic – with Finley and Orlando Patterson as the prominent representatives –, and another one that he calls historical-ideographic – for which he points to Joseph C. Miller and Kostas Vlassopoulos as central examples. Miller (2012) was a fundamental author in challenging the idea of “genuine slavery”, pointing out the historical diversity of forms of enslavement. To a certain extent, we align ourselves with this approach by recognizing the diversity of possible forms of enslavement in the Mediterranean world without distinguishing whether some would be genuine forms of slavery while others would be different forms of forced labor. We follow Vlassopoulos (2021, p. 179) closely here when he observes that “the distinction between slave societies and societies with slaves fails to explain the major differences among slave societies, as well as the existence of fault lines that put together certain slave societies and societies with slaves and oppose them to other slave societies”.

It is not, however, the central feature of what we are proposing in this text. More than a new contribution like that of Miller to the History of ancient slavery, our proposal tries to put the two perspectives into dialogue. We follow in the footsteps of Marquese (2024), who uses the temporalities of History, resorting to the theoretical reflections on Time of Fernand Braudel and Reinhart Koselleck as a key to such dialogue. Within this framework, we try to understand how elements elaborated by the theories of slavery developed by Finley and Patterson (which, although different, in a broad framework of slavery theory are more convergent with each other than divergent) reveal important questions for understanding the historical dynamics of slavery in the ancient Mediterranean. That is why we are delighted that Jane Webster drew attention in her commentary on how our model seemed not so far from that proposed by Finley. Miller’s work and the notion of historical diversity of forms of enslavement are, in their origin, a direct critique of how the History of slavery is theoretically

elaborated, of which Finley was one of the most important formulators. Although we develop our model on this notion of diversity, we believe that Finley's ideas (as well as Patterson's) can help us to theoretically frame and understand important aspects of the History of slavery in the *long durée*. Thus, more than a critique of Finley, we sought to present a model that, based on a critical approach to Finley's theoretical field, seeks to dialogue with his work to reveal theoretical aspects beneficial for the History of ancient slavery. Ultimately, it is a proposal to recover Finley's ideas within a field that is critical of him.

In this search for dialogue with Finley's theoretical elaboration, we highlight the importance of some ideas, such as "chattel slave", but we treat the concept of "slave society" critically. David Lewis makes a very interesting provocation when commenting on this criticism: are we criticizing a hammer for not sawing boards very well? Would "slave society" be a valuable concept for some uses other than those for which our proposed model would serve? Therefore, should we preserve both concepts instead of proposing the replacement of one by another? The provocation is pertinent and worth re-elaborating on what we think about the concept of slave society. However, it is important to clarify first what we want with our model so that, in dialogue with what was proposed in the comments, we can think about the place we envisage for the concept of slave society and the relationship between our proposal and other possible paths in the study of ancient slavery.

We would respond to Lewis's provocation first by stating that the hammer was used at some point to saw important boards in the historiography of ancient slavery. The History narrated in chapters 2 and 4 of Finley's *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* is structured by the idea of the rise and decline of slave societies. We direct our main criticisms against this macronarrative of rise and decline, and our model aims to be a tool for constructing an alternative history of Mediterranean slavery. The evaluation of colleagues and its eventual practical use in research on the History of the Mediterranean will tell us whether it is a good saw, a shovel, or a useless tool. We built our model on two central pillars – and if they are not helpful for the historical reflection on ancient slavery, this will undoubtedly indicate that our model will need to be discarded. The first is the idea that there were different forms of enslavement in the Mediterranean basin: epichoric slave systems. They are not more or less genuine slave systems but rather diverse systems of enslavement. Throughout History, however, a considerable part of them were significantly affected by dynamics of integration that generated panchoric systems of slavery – which we call Mediterranean slave systems. As Kostas Vlassopoulos points out in his commentary, our model is particularly interested in understanding the processes of entanglement and convergence of these epichoric systems, forming panchoric systems. We do not intend this model to be a "theory of everything" about ancient slavery. It is a model that seeks to understand this process of integration.

It does not mean, however, that it is a theory about a process of homogenization of slavery practices in the ancient Mediterranean. The term "system", which implies different parts with relative autonomy but articulated and, at some level, forming a whole, is particularly important for the elaboration of the idea that we want to present in this model. We are not proposing that a Mediterranean (and much less a *Roman*) slavery imposes itself and completely subsumes this diversity of local forms of slavery, homogenizing them all into a single form of slavery. On the contrary, the model recognizes the existence of this diversity but asks the following question: How were they affected and transformed by historical dynamics that went beyond themselves, that placed them in connection and eventually in integration with the world that went beyond their borders? How did they become part of a more extensive slave system, of which they are not a miniature but a part, a specific expression? It is an approach that is somewhat like that outlined by Youval Rotman when he considers the forms of slavery in the Mediterranean in the long term:

> The uniqueness of Mediterranean slaveries lies in their adaptability to the geopolitical, cultural and social changes of Mediterranean reality, which forms their dynamic character. Mediterranean slaveries cannot be fully explained if we look for a single definition to comprise them all. What we need to look for is the ways in which different forms of slaveries emerged in the Mediterranean and the conditions under which they developed. Nevertheless, we also need to bear in mind that such conditions were not necessarily confined to the Mediterranean environment, but were also determined by links to non-Mediterranean civilizations (Rotman, 2004, p. 264).

We point out one analytical possibility in the article without further development: the theory of uneven and combined development, which can help mitigate the methodological internalism of the concept of slave society. This Trotskyist theory has been recovered, especially in international relations studies, to overcome more internalist and Eurocentric approaches. Uneven and combined development means that there are variations in the internal development of societies and between them, concomitant with spatial differentiations between them, and that the internal relations of a given society are determined by its interactions with other societies that are differentiated in terms of their development, at the same time that this same interaction produces combinations of sociopolitical institutions, economic systems, ideologies, and material practices within a given social formation (Anievas; Nisancioglu, 2015, p. 44-48). It could be a methodological alternative for thinking about possibilities of connection and transformation between systems of slavery and compulsory labor in the Mediterranean, together with others already employed.

The conceptual pair globalization/glocalization, used by Vlassopoulos (2013) to reframe debates on cultural interaction in the ancient world, can also be helpful here. It is necessary to identify the processes that make some aspects of specific forms of slavery “globalize”. However, it is necessary to understand how these elements in globalization are glocalized, that is, remodeled locally in light of the specific dynamics of local realities. We considered the impact of Roman imperialism and the corresponding diffusion of Roman legal culture within this framework. The intention was not so much to elevate it to the status of the primary determinant in the formation of slave relations in the provinces but to point out a provincial protagonism in its reading and application, as indicated by the case studies cited in the text (Salsano, 1998; Czajkowski; Eckhardt, 2018). It would be the case of the glocalization of Roman law, the impact of which indeed varied in the different regions of the Empire based on local conditions. Among the comments, Airan Borges Oliveira’s contribution also shows that the epigraphic sources themselves, so important for understanding provincial slave contexts in this dynamic between global, local, and glocal, are themselves the result of the process of globalization-glocalization of the Roman epigraphic habit in the western provinces of the Roman Empire between the first and third centuries AD.

Therefore, identifying diversity and local variation in forms of slavery in the ancient Mediterranean is not an argument against our model. Such diversity is our starting point. The question is: Is this diversity affected (and not extinguished) by integration processes? We believe that the state-of-the-art research on ancient slavery indicates that the answer is yes, just as more recent works on the History of slavery have pointed in this direction. In the words of Damian Pargas (2023, p. 2):

> From antiquity to the present day, slavery has by definition connected societies through forced migrations, warfare, trade routes, and economic expansion. (...) Global and transnational approaches to history focus heavily upon the global movement of people, goods, and ideas, with a particular emphasis on processes of integration and divergence in the human experience. Slavery in various settings straddled all of these focal points, as it integrated various societies through economic and power-based relationships, and simultaneously divided societies by class, race, ethnicity, and cultural group.

Our model, therefore, aims to present possible conceptual tools for thinking about this process of contacts, connections, and integrations. Having explained what we intend to do with our saw, let us return to the hammer.

We agree with the comments that seek to re-establish on a new basis the importance of the conceptual tool “slave society”, focused on understanding other important issues in the study of ancient Mediterranean slavery. In particular, the proposal presented by García MacGaw in his commentary seems quite interesting to us. Recalling Keith Bradley’s contributions to the subject, he proposes that the concept of “slave society” serves to think about the institutional responses a society produces to manage the presence of enslaved people within it. In this sense, García MacGaw argues, there are no more or less genuine forms of slave societies but rather infinite variations in how slave societies are organized in the dynamics of the construction of slave institutions.

We can understand slave societies as the sedimentation of formal and informal institutions in the cultural, social, political, and economic spheres, brought about by the existence of slave systems and subsystems, epichoric and/or panchoric, within a specific community. The concept of “slave society” serves very well to frame specific analyses of these institutions and make formal comparisons between different regions. We would only argue that the study of these slave societies would have much to gain from understanding the systemic and Mediterranean dynamics of transformation of these specific and diverse slave practices, which would point in the direction of an “incorporated comparison” between elements that exist in connection, as different parts of the same integrated system (McMichael, 1990; Marquese, 2019, p. 30-31). These are alternative possibilities, and not opposing ones, which we can use together. A large construction depends on the coordinated use of saws, hammers, and many other tools.

TEMPORALITIES AND CHRONOLOGIES OF ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN SLAVERY

In addition to geographical connections, our model can also help us reflect on the time strata on which these slave institutions were built. Another fundamental element of our model, which also derives from the inspiration in Marquese’s work, is the idea that these Mediterranean systems have a history; that is, they unfold over temporalities, time strata, which delimit, enable and influence the dynamics of subsequent developments, establishing the horizons of possibilities for the constitution of these slave societies (Marquese; Silva Júnior, 2019; Marquese, 2024). Therefore, as Ferraro rightly emphasizes in his commentary, there are processes with specific and unique historical dynamics overlapping more than phases with rigid or static chronological frontiers. In the same sense, Leonardo Marques and Waldomiro da Silva Júnior (2024, p. 37-38) state that:

> slavery formed a historical system, that is, a set of interdependent practices and relationships, of varying duration, oriented towards their self-reproduction. This set, instead of a linear history, unfolds into different layers, giving rise to specific, singular space-time units, with reasonably clear chronological and geopolitical contours, but which are not exactly purely sequential stages or cycles, since they open up possibilities for synchronicities and asymmetrical combinations.

We proposed the identification of two temporalities in ancient Mediterranean slavery: the existence of two different historical dynamics that give rise to integration processes, the second being built on the strata of time sedimented by the first. Lewis called this the "phasal model". Many commentators have rightly criticized the idea that rigid chronology should be avoided in developing the proposed model since it gives a static and uniform character to what we call the first and second Mediterranean slavery. Some commentators have proposed considering other chronologies and other "Mediterranean slaveries", including earlier and later periods, identifying other pivotal moments, and/or proposing more specific temporalities. This aspect is highlighted by Lewis when he asks about the existence of slavery in the Mediterranean before what we call the first Mediterranean slavery and by Vlassopoulos regarding the place of slavery in the two centuries before the Christian era in the western and eastern Mediterranean. García MacGaw also notes that this latter one is a crucial period for understanding the dynamics of the slave trade. Interestingly, as Ferraro tells us, the division between "two slaveries" has also been questioned in the case of modern Atlantic slavery, and we believe that the questions raised by the commentaries really open the way for a more refined phasing of the temporalities of Mediterranean slavery.

More than settle the issue of the existence of two temporalities of ancient Mediterranean slavery, our purpose was to draw attention to the existence of temporalities in this slavery. Conventional definitions such as Greek slavery, Roman slavery, or Greco-Roman slavery do not account for the development, over the long term in the Mediterranean, of various forms of slavery and, at the same time, of a process of formation of a Mediterranean slave system. We thus seek to insert the debate on ancient slavery into discussions on the historical process of integration in the Mediterranean, which articulated communities producing increasingly differentiated social systems and defining their social and identity boundaries based on both structural determinants and specific historical circumstances (Horden; Purcell, 2000; Morris, 2003; Guarinello, 2013). One path that comes close to how we conceive of an integrated model of Mediterranean slavery is the one proposed by Dan-el Padilla Peralta and Seth Bernard (2022) to understand what they call middle Republican connectivities, to understand:

> how the movement of people, goods and ideas in the middle Republican period helped link Roman society to a wider Eurasian world. Cumulatively, changes in population, settlement, agricultural production, commercial activity, labour regimes and monetisation can be seen as indices of the emergent political economy that came to define middle republican Rome (Peralta; Bernard, 2022, p. 20).

Thinking about the historicity of slavery in the ancient Mediterranean certainly involves understanding these processes of integration in the Mediterranean, which go beyond the phenomenon of slavery itself, as García MacGaw points out. Vlassopoulos points out that our text has a more geopolitical and legal-institutional bias in presenting the problem, disregarding important economic elements in this process. His considerations about the elite slaveholding households and their role in structuring a new phase in the

History of Mediterranean slavery are thought-provoking. Another important economic element to include in this Mediterranean systemic view is the impact of slave trade chains on the labor regimes existing in different economic activities, such as mining and agriculture. Furthermore, as García MacGaw points out and already mentioned in this response, it is necessary to incorporate subaltern agency as a factor in the historical movement that we should delineate more systematically.

Many comments have addressed the conceptual pair “slaving zone” and “non-slaving zone”, forwarded by Fynn-Paul, which was very important for us to consider the temporalities of Mediterranean slavery. Although we recognize in the text that the Roman Empire was not a perfect non-slaving zone, in a passage highlighted by both Scopacasa and Webster, we assume that in the second Mediterranean slavery, the circulation of captives occurred substantially through long-distance mercantile circuits. It refers to an important debate on the demography of slavery in the Roman Empire (Harris, 1994; 1999; Scheidel, 2011), based on which both Scopacasa and Webster make important critical considerations regarding our formulation. We agree with both considerations, and it is necessary to give new treatment to the issue. One possibility can be found in the way Norberto Guarinello (2010) works with the concept of “frontier”, which is not restricted to territorial borders but includes borders constructed between internal fractures in imperial society. If “slaving zones” are thought of *a priori* on the margins of the “non-slaving zone”, on territorial borders, it seems promising to us to think about how social fractures internal to the territory of this supposed non-slaving zone allow the creation of true slaving zones that are quite prolific.

We can study an example of this process in the source analyzed by Filipe Noé Silva in his commentary. He studies the trade of free enslaved people in Roman Africa based on the *Epistle* 10* Divjak, of Saint Augustine. In this text, we are presented with a dynamic of kidnapping, enslavement, and trade of enslaved people in an interprovincial context, showing not only the “imperfection” of the imperial non-slaving zone but how slaving zones could be established on social fractures in specific territories of the Empire. This type of evidence reinforces Scopacasa’s observation that the concept of a “non-slaving zone” for the second Mediterranean slavery should have to take into account the rhythms of Roman expansion, which had a much more fluid and dynamic character, while in the case of the first Mediterranean slavery, in the context of the formation of city-states in the archaic period, changes in enslavement practices linked to the dynamics of the formation of these zones are more evident.

Returning to more general theoretical questions about these temporalities of slavery, it is important to say that our use of dialogue with the History of Atlantic slavery does not intend to mirror the characterization of the second Atlantic slavery for what we call the second Mediterranean slavery. As some commentators have rightly pointed out, the emergence of a new temporality of Atlantic slavery is a consequence of specific historical dynamics of the Atlantic world in the 18th and 19th centuries (development of Capitalism, Industrial Revolution, the crisis of the colonial systems and rise of the Nation-State, Abolitionism etc.), and is therefore historically specific. It is not our intention to try to find its parallels in the Mediterranean world of the first century BC and the first century AD. What we sought, first and foremost, was a theoretical-methodological inspiration that would allow us to re-elaborate starting points for the construction of forms, theories, and models to think about a history of ancient slavery, which is the fundamental movement of this historiographical production with which we seek to dialogue. It means recognizing the dynamics of permanence and transformation that shape and transform the slave systems of the ancient Mediterranean.

This dialogue opens up new possibilities for reflections on the place of ancient Mediterranean slavery in the global History of slavery, a long-standing debate to which

Finley himself has made an extremely influential contribution. As Ferraro points out in his commentary, our quest to elaborate a history of Mediterranean slavery allows us to consider the extent to which its strata of time have constituted a part of the historical sedimentation that constituted Atlantic slavery. Once again, this does not mean collapsing these slave phenomena into one another, assuming any structural permanence. It means that ancient Mediterranean slavery may have been one of the strata that established the horizons of possibility from which Atlantic slavery was constructed in a completely different historical context. In an opposite sense, thinking from Lewis's commentary on slavery in the Mediterranean before the 9th century BC and the need to overcome the risks of "Mediterranism", it is also possible to think about how Mediterranean slavery was, in turn, built on strata of time established by previous slave systems, which extended beyond the Mediterranean and whose knowledge is significantly fragmented due to the limits imposed by the sources (Taylor, 2001).

FINAL REMARKS

We have written a text to propose a model for the integration of ancient Mediterranean slave systems. However, we can also say that we have written a text to contribute to two integration processes in studies on ancient Mediterranean slavery. First, an internal integration strengthens the fields of dialogue and interconnection between the fields of study traditionally established around the forms "Greek slavery", "Roman slavery", and others. Second, an external integration sustains the dialogue of studies on slavery in the ancient Mediterranean within the broader field of studies on the Global History of Slavery in the long term. Both integrations have a rich previous historiography synthesized in Finley's pioneering work, and we hope that the model proposed in this debate lives up to this tradition. We also hope this response to the colleagues' comments, who kindly gave up their time to hold this debate and made us think and rethink this model, will increase our chances.

REFERENCES

ANIEVAS, Alexander; NIŞANCIOĞLU, Kerem. *How the West Came to Rule: The Geopolitical Origins of Capitalism*. London: Pluto Press, 2015.

BLOCH, Marc. *Apologia da História ou O Ofício de Historiador*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor Ltda, 2002.

BURNARD, Trevor. *Writing the History of Global Slavery*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023.

CARROLL, Maureen. "The Insignia of Women": Dress, Gender and Identity on the Roman Funerary Monument of Regina from Arbeia. *Archaeological Journal*, v. 169, n. 1, 2012, p. 281-311.

CHALHOUB, Sidney. *Visões da Liberdade*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1990.

COSTA, Emilia Viotti da. *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood*: The Demerara Slave Rebellion of 1823. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

CZAJKOWSKI, Kim; ECKHARDT, Benedikt. Law, Status and Agency in the Roman Provinces. *Past & Present*, v. 241, p. 3-31, 2018.

DA SILVA JÚNIOR, Waldomiro L.; MARQUES, Leonardo. A morfologia histórica do escravismo Atlântico. *In:* MARQUESE, R. de B.; PIMENTA, J. P.; MORELI, A.; SOARES, R. G. (eds.). *Sistemas, tempos e espaços: Lab-Mundi em dez anos de fazer historiográfico*. São Leopoldo: Casa Leiria, 2024, p. 36-48.

FINLEY, Moses I. Generalizations in Ancient History. *In:* FINLEY, M. I. *The use and abuse of History.* London: Chatto and Windus, 1975.

FINLEY, Moses I. *Ancient History*. Evidence and Models. New York: Viking, 1986.

FINLEY, Moses I. *Escravidão antiga e ideologia moderna.* Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 1991.

GINZBURG, Carlo. Micro-história: duas ou três coisas que sei a respeito. *In:* GINZBURG, C. *O fio e os rastros:* verdadeiro, falso, fictício. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2007, p. 249-279.

GRENDI, Edoardo. Micro-analisi e storia sociale. *Quaderni storici*, v. 35, n. 2, 1977, p. 506-520.

GUARINELLO, Norberto Luiz. Ordem, integração e fronteiras no Império Romano: um ensaio. *Mare Nostrum*, 1, 2010, p.113-127.

GUARINELLO, Norberto L. *História Antiga*. São Paulo: Contexto, 2013.

HARRIS, William V. Child-exposure in the Roman Empire. *Journal of Roman Studies*, v. 84, p. 1-22, 1994.

HARRIS, William V. Demography, geography and the sources of Roman slaves. *Journal of Roman Studies*, v. 89, p. 62-75, 1999.

HORDEN, Peregrine; PURCELL, Nicholas. *The Corrupting Sea*: A Study of Mediterranean History. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000.

LEVI, Giovanni. *A Herança Imaterial. Trajetória de um exorcista no Piemonte do século XVII.* São Paulo: Editora Record, 2000.

MARQUESE, Rafael de B. A escravidão moderna como problema historiográfico. *In*: MENONCELLO, A. M.; GARAY, R. G.; CEZAR, T.; GUTERRES, T. da C. (org.). *Problemas de historiografia antiga e moderna: Estudos e discussões em tempos de pandemia*. Vitória: Editora Milfontes, 2024, p. 307-336.

MARQUESE, Rafael de B. A História Global da Escravidão Atlântica: Balanço e Perspectivas. *Esboços*, 26(41), p. 14-41, 2019.

MARQUESE, Rafael de B.; DA SILVA JÚNIOR, Waldomiro L. Tempos históricos plurais: Braudel, Koselleck e o problema da escravidão negra nas Américas. *História da Historiografia: International Journal of Theory and History of Historiography*, v. 11, n. 28, p. 44-81, 2018.

MARX, Karl. *O 18 Brumário de Luís Bonaparte*. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2011.

McMICHAEL, Philip. Incorporating Comparison within a World-Historical Perspective: An Alternative Comparative Method. *American Sociological Review*, v. 55(3), p. 385-397, 1990.

MILLER, Joseph. *The Problem of Slavery as History*: A Global Approach. Yale: Yale University Press, 2012.

MORLEY, Neville. *Theories, Models, and Concepts in Ancient History*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

MORRIS, Ian. Mediterraneanization. *Mediterranean Historical Review*, v. 18, n. 2, p. 30-55, 2003.

PARGAS, Damian. Introduction: Historicizing and Spatializing Global Slavery. *In:* PARGAS, D.; SCHIEL, J. (eds.). *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Slavery throughout History*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023, p. 1-16.

PERALTA, Dan-el Padilla; BERNARD, Seth. Middle Republican Connectivities. *Journal of Roman Studies*, v. 112, p. 1-37, 2022.

ROTMAN, Y. Forms of Slavery. *In:* HORDEN, P.; KINOSHITA, S. (eds.). *A Companion to Mediterranean History*. Malden: Wiley, 2014, p. 263-278.

SALSANO, Debora. *Manumissio vindicta* in ambiente provincial: Problemi e proposte. *Chiron,* 28, p. 178-185, 1998.

SCHEIDEL, Walter. The Roman slave supply. *In*: BRADLEY, K.; CARTLEDGE, P. (org.). *The Cambridge world history of slavery*, volume 1: the ancient Mediterranean world. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 287-310.

TAYLOR, Timothy. Believing the ancients: Quantitative and qualitative dimensions of slavery and the slave trade in later prehistoric Eurasia. *World Archaeology*, 33:1, p. 27-43, 2001.

TRIVELLATO, Francesca. Is there a future for Italian Microhistory in the age of Global History?. *California Italian Studies*, 2(1), 2011.

VLASSOPOULOS, Kostas. *Greeks and barbarians*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

VLASSOPOULOS, Kostas. *Historicising Ancient Slavery*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021.

VOGT, Joseph. The structure of Ancient Slave Wars. *In: Ancient slavery and the ideal of man.* Translated by Thomas Wiedemann. Cambridge/Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1975, p. 39-92.

WEINSTEIN, Barbara. História sem causa? A nova história cultural, a grande narrativa e o dilema pós-colonial. *História (São Paulo)*, 22, nº 2, p. 185-210, 2003.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

AUTHORSHIP

Fabio Duarte Joly: PhD. Full Professor. Universidade Federal de Ouro Preto, Instituto de Ciências Humanas e Sociais, Departamento de História, Mariana, MG, Brazil. Rua do Seminário, s/n, 35420-087, Mariana, MG. Brazil.

José Ernesto Moura Knust. PhD. EBTT Professor. Instituto Federal Fluminense, Macaé, RJ, Brazil. Rodovia Amaral Peixoto Km 164, Imboassica, 27932-050, Macaé, RJ, Brazil.

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE
Rua do Seminário, s/n. – Centro, 35420-000, Mariana, MG, Brazil.

SOURCE OF THE ARTICLE
This article has profitted from discussions in the Mithra-Laboratory of Ancient Global History (UFSC) and in the research project SlaVEgents: enslaved persons in the making of societies and cultures in Western Eurasia and North Africa, 1000 BCE-300 CE. We presented preliminary versions in a seminar of the graduate programme of UFRPE, in 2021, in the V Encontro do GT de História Antiga e Medieval, Anpuh/SC, in 2023, in the V Jornada de Investigación sobre Sociedades Precapitalistas, CESP/UNLP, also in 2023, and in a conference in the graduate programme of UFAM in 2024.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
We are thankful for commentaries to preliminary versions made by Uiran Gebara da Silva, Fábio Augusto Morales Soares, Waldomiro Lourenço da Silva Jr., Rafael de Bivar Marquese, Kostas Vlassopoulos, Joana Campos Clímaco, and Átila Augusto Vilar de Almeida.

AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION
Conceptualization and elaboration of the manuscript, Data collection, Results discussion, Revision and approval: Fábio Duarte Joly and José Ernesto Moura Knust.

FUNDING
Research for this article was conducted under the project SLaVEgents - Enslaved persons in the making of societies and cultures in Western Eurasia and North Africa, 1000 BCE - 300 CE granted by the European Research Council (Advanced Grant 2022 – Grant Agreement no. 101095823) to Kostas Vlassopoulos as principal researcher (Institute for Mediterranean Studies, IMS – Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas, FORTH).

IMAGE USE AGREEMENT
Not applicable.

ETHICS COMMITTEE APROVAL
Not applicable.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST
There are no conflicts of interest.

PREPRINT
This article is not a preprint.

PUBLISHER
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina. Graduate Program in History. UFSC Journal Portal. The ideas expressed in this article are the sole responsibility of its authors, and do not represent, necessarily, the opinion of the editors or the University.

EDITOR
Fábio A. Morales.

HISTORY
Received: January 26, 2025.
Aproved: January 27, 2025.

How to cite it: JOLY, Fábio D.; KNUST, José E. M. Limits and possibilities of a model for the study of slavery in the ancient Mediterranean. *Esboços*, Florianópolis, v. 31, n. 57, p. 539-557, 2024. [English]