



# The gains of their sorrow: Slavery, the slave trade, and the rise of capitalism in the other South

Lisbon, 19 June 2024

## **Organizer:**

J. Bohorquez (Institute of Contemporary History — NOVA FCSH)

## **Invited Speakers**

David Wheat (Michigan State University)

Nicholas Radburn (Landcaster University)

Pepjin Brandon (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

The slave trade and slavery have regained considerable attention in the last decades. Thanks to a booming and remarkable research agenda, plenty of knowledge is now available on how the Atlantic slave trade was organized and profits obtained from the use of enslaved people across the Americas. No matter the impressive advances recently made, a gulf still separates those scholars who focus on the Middle Passage and those who instead place their attention on mines, plantations, urban jobs, and other economic sectors in which enslaved people were compelled to work.

This disconnection makes it hard to determine how to accurately appraise and measure the gains that were obtained throughout the whole business cycle: from the very moment in which Africans were put into captivity, the Atlantic and inter-colonial circulation of humans in shackles, and ultimately, the extraction of labor in the American lands, not to mention the reproduction of humans in captivity. This workshop seeks to open a debate on prospective bridges that might help us to connect both fields of research. The workshop further delves into this issue from an Iberian perspective that might serve to further reread Anglo- and American-centric approaches to slavery and the slave trade. It also aims at contrasting the Luso-Brazilian and Spanish imperial participation with the experiences conducted by other imperial powers in an attempt to find resemblances and differences. Papers are therefore welcomed on the British, Dutch, and French cases.

Proposals are invited for papers that address the following issues:

- 1. The organization of the slave trade, and in particular, microhistories of agents who invested their capital in the different stages of the traffic (Peninsular-, African-, or American-based). Studies are particularly welcomed on those women who participated in the traffic and profited from enslaved labor. How can we compare these microhistories in order to offer a larger perspective?
- 2. The global and local circulation of textiles, metals, luxury goods or any other commodities purchased with the goal to barter humans.
- 3. Accounting history: how companies, firms, and traders kept ledgers.
- 4. Credit advanced in Europe, Africa and the colonies, as well as oceanic and intracolony circuits of credit along with the mercantile institutions that supported those chains of debt.
- 5. The participation of foreign actors and foreign capital invested in Spanish and Portuguese trading circuits.
- 6. The numbers of enslaved humans held in captivity in different economic sectors.
- 7. Stories of reinvestments: how money received from the slave trade and the use of captives was put back into the same investment or another investment.
- 8. The slave trade, slavery, and bankruptcies.

Please, send a short CV along with a one-page abstract to [jesusbarrera@fcsh.unl.pt](mailto:jesusbarrera@fcsh.unl.pt) with CC to [jesus.bohorquez@eui.eu](mailto:jesus.bohorquez@eui.eu) by **31 January 2024**. We prefer papers that expand on new unearthed sources or data or which explore new ways to read old datasets.

Accommodation will be provided for early career scholars or PhD researchers.

Papers in English are expected to circulate by 15 May 2024.

Language arrangements can be made for those who prefer to present in Portuguese or Spanish.