

46th International Wolfenbüttel Summer Course

EARLY MODERN SLAVERY

(Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, 8-19 July 2024)

Instructor:

Francisco Bethencourt (King's College London)

The purpose of this summer course for PhD students at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel is to provide solid knowledge on the legal framework and practices of slavery in Europe and the Atlantic World created by European colonization. The students will also be introduced to the debate on different forms of bondage in Asia and Africa. This comparative program will include the economic, cultural, and social impact of the enslavement of people, the lives and legacies of enslaved people, and the impact of enslaved and liberated Black people on colonial societies.

These are the questions that structure the course: What were the configurations of slavery in Europe? How did forms of bondage vary in different parts of the world? What was the role of the slave trade and slavery in the European empires? In what ways did these experiences impact values, emotions, and social perceptions? How did racial theories evolve from discriminatory practices? How did African resistance influence early abolitionism? What was the real impact of abolitionism in Europe and other parts of the world? How can we address the long-term consequences of slavery? Why is the issue of memory and restitution of objects so important nowadays?

The course will be organized over two weeks, from July 8 to 19, 2024 (arrival: Sunday, July 7, departure: Saturday, July 20, 2024). The sessions take place every morning from 9h–13h. They will comprehend an introduction to the main issues, presentation of crucial texts, and discussion.

Here is the content of the sessions with the respective conveners:

July 8, 2024, Monday. Francisco Bethencourt (King's College London): Opening the course; main lines of enquiry on the slave trade, slavery, and racial theories.

July 9 and 10, Tuesday and Wednesday. Rebekka von Mallinckrodt (Universität Bremen): European legal and practical configurations of slavery

July 11 and 12, Thursday and Friday. José Lingna Nafafé (University of Bristol): Different regimes of bondage in Africa; early African abolitionist movements

July 15 and 16, Monday and Tuesday: Rômulo Ehalt (Max Planck Institute für Rechtsgeschichte und Rechtstheorie): Different regimes and practices of bondage in Asia

July 17 and 18, Wednesday and Thursday. Chloe Ireton (University College London): Configurations of slavery in the Americas; the lives of enslaved and liberated Black people and their impact on colonial societies

July 19, Friday. Francisco Bethencourt: Conclusion of the course; long-term impact of slavery