

Monday, 24.10.2022; 4:15 - 6:00 pm CEST

João Fragoso, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil;

Thiago Krause, Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil:

**Sugar Mill Owners, Slavery, and the Slave Trade in Brazil: Bahia and Rio de Janeiro, 1600-1750.**

Abstract:

Salvador and Rio de Janeiro were the two largest slaving ports of the Americas, but they followed very different trajectories. Therefore, a comparison can shine a powerful light on the history of Atlantic slavery. Built upon the same ideological foundations of a Catholic Ancien Régime that had inequality as its lodestar, they diverged from the beginning, both because their sugar production was valued differently and because Crown presence was very distinct: Salvador was Brazil's first capital and its commodities fetched better prices. Nevertheless, in both places the economy was strongly molded by the political action of elites who tried to set setting of sugar prices, financed export production through local institutions and manipulated currency values. On the other hand, they also grew apart thanks to their African connections (Bahia was closely linked to the trans-imperial space of West Africa, while Rio was strongly bonded with Portuguese Angola) and the differential strength of their ties with the gold- and silver-rich areas of Rio de la Plata and Minas Gerais.

This presentation will trace the transformations in the century and a half that culminated in the passing of the baton as largest slave port and capital to Rio de Janeiro, taking into account developments in European consumer markets (above all Caribbean competition and the increasing importance of the Mediterranean), growth of internal market and political developments of the pluricontinental Portuguese monarchy, which increased its state capacity, even though it could never dispense with local allies.

We will show that their role as major enslaving ports was not predicated only in their sugar hinterlands, because it was strongly linked to commercial networks that were increasingly both outside European control and escaping the grasp of the local slaveholding nobilities thanks to the rise of powerful local merchant elites.

Bio:

João Fragoso is Full Professor of History at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Among many articles and book chapters, he is the author of *Homens de grossa aventura: acumulação e hierarquia na praça mercantil do Rio de Janeiro, 1790-1830* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1998, winner of the prize of the Brazilian National Archives in 1991) e coeditor of *O Brasil Colonial, 1443– 1822* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 3 volumes, with Maria de Fátima Gouvêa, winner of the Jabuti Prize in the Humanities, in 2015, and currently in its 6<sup>th</sup> edition).

Thiago Krause is Assistant Professor of Colonial Brazilian History at the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro and, in 2022-2023, member of the Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton). Among other works, he is the coauthor of *Império em Disputa:*

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*Coroa, oligarquia e povo na formação do Estado brasileiro, 1823-1870* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora da Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 2022, with Rodrigo Goyena Soares) and is coauthoring a book on the global history of Colonial Salvador with Christopher Ebert.