

Call for Papers: Dealing with Racial Capitalism

When: October 5 - October 7, 2027

Where: Tübingen, Germany

Deadline: November 16, 2026

Convenors: Lena Essifi, Clara-Sophie Höhn, Nadja Klopprogge

The workshop *Dealing with Racial Capitalism* asks three interrelated questions:

First, how to *deal with* racial capitalism on a theoretical and methodological level? We seek to explore what the concept can contribute across different disciplines, how it has been mobilized in existing scholarship, and what its analytical potential and limitations are. This also entails tracing the historiography of the notion while placing it in conversation with related intellectual traditions and concepts, such as African socialism, anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, and other critical approaches to capitalism and race. Rather than treating these traditions as interchangeable, we aim to tease out their conceptual affinities, differences, and respective analytical edges.

Second, how did people *deal with* racial capitalism? We are interested in empirically grounded case studies, particularly historical research that traces racial capitalism through practices such as accounting, calculating profit, assessing value, handing out or owning credit, or other economic practices. At the same time, we seek contributions that foreground the lived experience of racial capitalism—for instance, through experiences of sharecropping, prison labor, labor migration, slavery, reproduction or other forms of racialized exploitation and expropriation. This also includes asking how people resisted racial capitalism or outright refused economist theorization, proposing alternative ways of being and belonging. For us, this also means understanding racial capitalism through an intersectional lens. Building on the work of scholars such as Jennifer L. Morgan, we are interested in approaches that examine how gender, dis/ability, and coloniality, etc. play(ed) into the practices and experiences of racial capitalism.

Third, how can we *deal with* racial capitalism beyond prevailing narratives? Particularly in historiography, the concept has often been developed primarily through the lens of the United States and the history of slavery. While these histories remain foundational, we start from the premise that capitalism is a global phenomenon and therefore ask how racial capitalism played out in a variety of settings and how it works on a broader scale. We seek contributions that

explore the concept across different geographical regions, historical periods, and contexts, examining both its applicability and its limits beyond the U.S. case.

Overall, the workshop seeks to bring together scholars working on and with the concept of racial capitalism in history, sociology, anthropology, and related disciplines. We welcome contributions that combine theoretical and methodological reflection with empirically grounded research. In particular, we are interested in studies that illuminate both the lived experience of racial capitalism and the everyday practices and (intimate) relations through which it is produced, sustained, and resisted.

Please submit your paper proposal of about 300 words as well as a short biography of about 100 words by **16 November 2026** to the conference organizers Clara-Sophie Höhn (clara-sophie.hoehn@uni-tuebingen.de) and Lena Essifi (lena.essifi@uni-tuebingen.de). If you have any questions regarding the CfP or the workshop, please reach out to the organizers as well. Applicants will be notified of our decision by 18 December 2026.

Accommodation in Tübingen will be funded. Please indicate if you need further financial support for your travel costs.

Please note that paper drafts will be circulated to facilitate discussion two weeks before the conference.

We are committed to creating an accessible, family-friendly, and inclusive conference environment that supports the diverse needs of our participants. If you require any additional support or accommodation to participate fully, please let us know.