Call for Papers
BCDSS International e-Symposium
Contemporary Asymmetrical Dependencies
Beyond the Pandemic: COVID-19, Migration and Global Labour

The COVID-19 pandemic that has swept the world has dramatically altered global supply chains, labour markets, and society as a whole. In a matter of weeks, unprecedented constraints on mobility were introduced through the closure of international borders, limitations on freedom of movement, and mandatory quarantines which resulted in business closures, job losses and massive unemployment. The pandemic and its aftermath created and reinforced economical, social and structural inequalities, disparities and therefore asymmetrical dependencies that impacted almost all workers, but particularly migrant workers. The restrictions on the global movement of goods, commodities and labour revealed the precarious position of these workers and forced many migrants around the world into exploitative and dependent relationships.

As the COVID-19 crisis continues to unfold, this e-symposium aims to shed light on the dynamics between the twin aspects of global migration and labour processes. This also includes much-needed reflection on how the pandemic has increased racialized inequalities in many societies.

This e-symposium is being organized by the Research Group Contemporary Asymmetrical Dependencies (CAD) at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, University of Bonn, Germany. Focusing on this nexus between pandemic, migrant labour and vulnerabilities, we hope that this symposium will highlight some of the major challenges that arose from the COVID-19 pandemic, and provide a direction for future research and policy engagement. Participants will bring a diverse range of voices from all over the world to revisit the question of how precarity and the movement of labour(ing people) result in aggravating (in)visible asymmetrical dependencies in the system of coercion around the world.

What do we know about the implications of COVID-19 for migrant labour, and what are the implications of the measures taken for migrants? What can research on migration labour do for those most affected by this crisis? What does it mean to carry out research and address policies on race, labour and migration in the post-COVID world?

We call on academics of all disciplines doing research in the field of migration, COVID-19 and global labour, as well as artists or professionals from other backgrounds working on migration issues. We especially welcome all those who work on research topics like embodied dependencies, gender and intersectionality, labour and spatiality, and institutions and practices. The official language for the e-symposium is English. Accepted submission formats include papers, posters, presentations, panel discussions, art pieces and (multi-) media formats. Interested participants are invited to submit a 250-word abstract that aims to explore accounts of migrants and their labour experiences in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and asymmetrical dependencies, along with a 150 words short bio.


Please submit your application to cad@dependency.uni-bonn.de
For further details, queries and clarification, please contact us.