

LONGUE DURÉE APPROACHES TO THE GLOBAL PLANTATION COMPLEX

HYBRID WORKSHOP

NOVEMBER 20, 2025

THE BONN CENTER FOR DEPENDENCY AND SLAVERY STUDIES

hosts the Cluster of Excellence “Beyond Slavery and Freedom”, which aims to overcome the binary opposition of “slavery versus freedom”. We approach the phenomenon of slavery and other types of strong asymmetrical dependency from methodologically and theoretically distinct perspectives.

From the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, plantations in the Caribbean, South America, and the southern United States played a central role in shaping the Atlantic economy, and served as a model for extractive systems across the modern global countryside. Although the connections between the collapse of slave-based Caribbean regimes and modern commodity frontiers are well-known, this workshop aims to reevaluate the origins, structures, and broader implications of plantations beyond the Atlantic world. The workshop will feature panel discussions in which early-career scholars will be paired with established researchers who will serve as moderators to foster productive, in-depth dialogue.

**Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS)
University of Bonn**

Niebuhrstraße 5
D-53113 Bonn
dependency@uni-bonn.de
www.dependency.uni-bonn.de

Follow us on social media:



@dependencybonn.de



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UNIVERSITÄT



**BONN CENTER
FOR DEPENDENCY
AND SLAVERY
STUDIES**

VENUE

University of Bonn

Conference Room 0.018

Niebuhrstraße 5

D-53113 Bonn

CONTACT

Workshop Organizer:

Joseph Biggerstaff

BCDSS PhD Researcher

Jan Hörber, Event Coordinator

events@dependency.uni-bonn.de

+49 228 73 62945

Please **register and state if you would like to participate in person or online by November 13, 2025**

via events@dependency.uni-bonn.de



Picture credit: Volker Lannert/University of Bonn

Thursday, November 20, 2025

10:00 – 10:30 AM

Registration and Coffee

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Panel 1: Early Modern Lineaments

Chair: Eva Lehner (BCDSS, University of Bonn)

Age, Refuge-Making, and Intimate Relations in the Formation of Precolonial Plantations of West Central Africa

Esteban Salas
(SOAS, University of London)

The Bloody Birth of the French Caribbean Sugar Complex: Imperial Rivalry, Coercive Networks, and Indigenous and Black Social Upheaval, 1638–1697

Florian Wiesner
(University of Edinburgh)

Organising Labour and Innovation in the Gardens of the *Rab'-i Rashīdī* Pious Endowment in Fourteenth-Century Mongol Tabriz

Riaz Howey
(MPIWG Berlin & University Bonn)

12:00 – 1:00 PM – Lunch Break

Thursday, November 20, 2025

1:00 – 2:30 PM

Panel 2: Networks and Capital in the Atlantic World

Chair: Jutta Wimmeler (BCDSS, University of Bonn)

German Slavery: The Rise of (Financial) Capitalism in the Atlantic World, 1598-1863: A Spatialized Global History

Constanze Weiske
(GESI, Leipzig University)

‘Sugar Comes But Once a Year’: Kinship, Credit Networks, and the Reintegration of the Caribbean and British Isles, 1696-1740

Joseph Biggerstaff
(BCDSS, University of Bonn)

Metropolitan Capital, the Bank of England, and Plantation Development in the Ceded Islands, 1763-90

Michael Bennett
(University of Sheffield, online)

2:30 – 3:00 PM – Coffee Break

Thursday, November 20, 2025

3:00 – 5:00 PM

Panel 3: The Long Nineteenth Century

Chair: Nitin Varma (BCDSS Fellow)

‘Drained of All their Capital?’: Plantation Labour and Environmental Transformation in Post-Emancipation British Guiana, 1834-1920

Fred Bricknell
(Wilberforce Institute, Hull)

Intercolonial Cinnamon: Fashioning Connections from the Eighteenth to Mid-Nineteenth Centuries

Dan Costa
(LMU Munich)

Sugar, Labour, and Migration in the United Provinces, c.1870–1940: Rethinking the Plantation Complex Beyond the Atlantic

Sachin Dev
(Delhi University, online)

Beneath the Leaves: Challenges and Dependencies in Malawi’s Tea, Tobacco, and Sugarcane Plantations Throughout the Long 20th Century

David Drengk
(Ruhr University Bochum)

5:00 – 5:30 PM – Coffee Break

5:30 – 7:00 PM:

Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture

The Plantation Complex: Towards a Global History

Randy M. Browne (Xavier University, online)

7:30 PM – Conference Dinner (for Speakers, Organizers and Panel Chairs only)