



## BCDSS Newsletter No. 2/May 2019

*Overview about upcoming Events  
related to BCDSS:*

### Upcoming Events

## BONN CENTER FOR DEPENDENCY AND SLAVERY STUDIES

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## Dependency Workshop Series 2019

*University of Bonn, Genscherallee 2*

The Dependency Workshop Series is a are organized by Dr. Hanne Østhus and Dr. Christian De Vito. There will be four workshops held within the whole year:



**Upcoming  
Workshops**

### ***Workshop 1 - The Concept of Dependency. An introduction***

The purpose of the workshop is to start the conceptual discussion of on "dependency", as it is at the very heart of the BCDSS.

8 May 2019, 10:00-12:00h

### ***Workshop 2 - Structure, Agency and Practices***

How can we study the role of the "dependent"? For many, the answer is to use the concept of agency, which is central to the BCDSS. The second workshop in the "Dependency Workshop Series" will therefore look at the concept and use of agency and the related concepts of structure and practices. Particular focus will be on the relationship between them.

25 June 2019, 10:00-12:00h

### ***Workshop 3 - The spatiality of dependency***

In the study of the production and reproduction of dependency, the key methodological issue emerges regarding the ways "the local" and "the global" are understood, combined and constructed. The third workshop in the "Dependency Workshop Series" addresses several related questions, among others: How can the standard local/global divide be overcome? Is "scale" an appropriate analytical tool to this end? How can we concretely ground large historical processes (including dependency) in specific places and connections? How do flows of individuals, objects, ideas and practices impact on the production of large historical processes? Underlying these questions, the epistemological issue emerges of the circumstances under which global history and microhistory can be combined.

24 September 2019, 10:00-12:00h

### ***Workshop 4 – Comparisons***

At the BCDSS, scholars explore a number of different regions, areas and countries from almost all time periods in human history. The task of this fourth workshop in the "Dependency



Workshop Series" is to explore how we can compare "dependencies" over time and across space. The workshop will look at this from two perspectives: first, the methodological question of how we choose unit(s) of comparisons, and second, how we can compare i) in the same time period, but particularly ii) trans-epochally?

26 November 2019, 10:00-12:00h

For further information, and for requesting digital copies of the readings, please write to: [cdevito@uni.bonn.de](mailto:cdevito@uni.bonn.de) or [hosthus@uni-bonn.de](mailto:hosthus@uni-bonn.de) and see <https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/pressreleases/dependency-workshop-series-2019>.

## Upcoming Lecture

### Lecture: "Human Trafficking in Late Imperial China: Evidence and Interpretative Framework" by Dr. Claude Chevaleyre

*Annemarie-Schimmel-Kolleg, Heussallee 18-24, 13 May 2019*

As some historians of global slavery observed recently, China "has a problem with slavery." This problem is a multi-faceted one that includes not only how "slavery" in China is or should be defined and conceptualized, or its scale and importance in Chinese history, but also the extent and ways in which men, women, and children were trafficked, a topic that previous studies of human bondage in China frequently ignore. This lecture will present preliminary evidence of the existence and dynamics of networks of human trafficking during the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) eras. In so doing, it will raise issues that future research will need to address such as evaluating the transnational dimensions of human trafficking in China and this traffic's entanglement with local practices of bondage and servitude, markets in human beings, and commodity chains. It will also question the relevance of applying the categories and interpretative frameworks of "slavery" to contexts that did not contribute to shape them.

Dr. Claude Chevaleyre is coordinator of the research group "Beyond Slavery: Dependency in Asian History" and research fellow at the Institute of East Asian Studies, ENS Lyon. His research focuses on human bondage in Early Modern China (15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries).

Find more information see: <https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/events/human-trafficking-in-late-imperial-china-evidence-and-interpretative-framework>



## Conference: “Future today/ yesterday/ tomorrow: Visions of future(s) in the Americas”

Panel 14: Slavery and Other Forms of Dependencies in Precolonial and Colonial Societies of the Americas

*Main building (Hauptgebäude) of the University of Bonn, Am Hof 1,  
12. – 14. June 2019 Organisation: Antje Gunsenheimer and Karoline Noack*

**Upcoming  
Workshops**

While slavery is commonly regarded as modern phenomenon in the Americas, we analyze forms of dependencies in precolombian and colonial societies and, what kind of economic and social significance they had for the respective society. Regarding the fluid transition between complete and temporary slavery, we explore its exact meaning (physically and temporally) and if it is comparable to the forms of slavery in other premodern societies.

We will also discuss the types of work unfree servants had to accomplish, the social recognition of their work, and which forms of agency they were allowed. Could servants manage their future on their own? Did they have options to leave dependency and to (re)gain a recognized position in society or were there only other options

of servility? This leads to the question about the status of serfs in their respective society. Were they „strangers at the site of their slavery“ and did they take the place of „individuals at the lowest rank“, and thus being considered „dishonorable“ and „socially dead“ in the sense of Orlando Patterson?

The workshop is part of the Conference “Future today/yesterday/tomorrow: Visions of future(s) in the Americas” organized by the Department of Anthropology of the Americas, the Interdisciplinary Latin America Center (ILZ) at the University of Bonn and the German Anthropological Association (DGSKA). The aim of the conference is to open the debate on the topic of “future” as field of research in the Humanities and in Cultural studies. Therefore the diverse and complex forms and dimensions of “Future” across space and time in the Americas are going to be discussed in more than 30 panels during the conference.

Find more information see: <https://www.americas2019.uni-bonn.de/program/panel-programs>



## Upcoming Workshops

### Workshop: “Grammars of Dependency - The Archaeology of Social Inequality in Global Perspective”

*Vienna University, Oskar-Morgenstern-Platz 1, 1090 Wien, 17 June 2019*

The Workshop is organized by the European Labour History Network working group „Free and Unfree labor“ in cooperation with the BCDSS and the Vienna Research Group „Figurations of Social Inequality“. The collaborative project of the Research Area A is to develop new linguistic concepts to capture models of dependency. The aim of the workshop is to give an overview about the current research and to define a common approach for the collaborative project. The lectures held are treating dependencies in different social and cultural contexts. For example: The Case of Ancient Rome, the Arabic Middle Ages, the Ottoman Empire, Contemporary Africa, Early Modern China and Early Modern Scandinavia.

### Summer celebration of the University of Bonn

*University of Bonn, Campus Poppelsdorf, 29. June 2019 13:00-22:00h*

Once again the summer celebration of the University of Bonn is taking place in Poppelsdorf with a widespread program.

## Upcoming Celebration

The BCDSS is going to contribute to the celebration with the lecture “**Sklaven in der Vitrine? - Bilder der Abhängigkeit in Bonner Uni-Museen.**” We will introduce representations of dependencies found in the museums of the University of Bonn. The three archaeological museums of the University of Bonn are offering a great variety of embodiments of asymmetrical dependencies barely known to the wider public.

The lecture will be held conjointly by Dennis Mario Beck (Department for Classical Archaeology), Karoline Noack (Department for the Anthropology of the Americas) and Ludwig Morenz (Department of Egyptology).

Find more information see <https://www.sommerfest.uni-bonn.de/>



## Upcoming Workshop

### Workshop: “Kneeling Women, Blinded Slaves - Character Interpretation and the Historical Semantics of Chinese Terms of Dependency”

*Ruhr University Bochum, 12–13 July 2019*

Semantic analysis based on character interpretation once formed an indispensable part of traditional Chinese lexicography and has led to many fanciful claims and speculations – often also with regard to expressions belonging to the semantic field of asymmetrical dependency. Thus, the character for the word nü, “woman”, 女, has been argued to depict a kneeling woman, a posture that reflects women’s generally inferior position in pre-modern Chinese society. Or, to give another example, Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892–1978), interpreting early written representations of the word min 民, “people”, once came to the conclusion that the term must originally have designated slaves who had been punished by having had one of their eyes gouged out. While these and similar interpretations have lost much of their appeal today, they often continue to be cited in dictionaries and encyclopedias, indicating that picto- and ideographical elements of the Chinese script remain an influential factor in modern Chinese lexicographical research. Although such instances of folk etymology normally fail to provide us with reliable information pertaining to the conceptual content of a certain lexeme, a correlation between semantic value and orthographical form cannot be dismissed categorically. Furthermore, given the prevalence of such folk etymologies in pre-modern Chinese lexicography, it is likely that the results of character interpretation themselves may have left a significant imprint on the later semantic development of certain words. How then should we characterize the basic relationship between a lexeme’s written form and its meaning in Classical Chinese and Modern Mandarin? How did form and meaning influence each other and how can knowledge about their interplay help us to improve research methods in the field of Chinese historical semantics? Several leading international experts in the field of Chinese paleography and historical semantics have been invited to address these and other questions with regard to the semantic field of asymmetrical dependency in Classical Chinese and Modern Mandarin. Considering that the Greco-Roman notion of “slavery” still prevails in modern research on dependency, an examination of pre-modern Chinese concepts of domination and submission affords the unique opportunity to provide a foil against which the results of Eurocentric dependency studies can be tested. Moreover, it will provide valuable insights into the traditional Chinese social construction of reality and help to deconstruct existing concepts and narratives of “freedom” and “slavery”, thus opening up new avenues for a non-Eurocentric taxonomy of dependencies.

***The Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies is currently calling for papers for:***

## **Workshop: Gender, Intersectionality and Dependency**

*University of Bonn, 18-19 July 2019*

**Call for  
Papers**

In January 2019 the new Cluster of Excellence “Beyond Slavery and Freedom. Asymmetrical Dependencies in Pre-Modern Societies” was established at the University of Bonn.

So far, dependency research has often dealt with transatlantic slavery or slavery in antiquity. The Cluster seeks to broaden this perspective in terms of content, space and time. From the starting point of five research areas, researchers will explore perspectives of dependency(ies), with the added aim of also broadening individual academic training through cooperation across disciplines.

Research Area E: Gender and Intersectionality focuses on how asymmetrical dependencies emerge at the intersections of gender, status, class, ethnicity, religion, and age. The question of gender asymmetries arises in connection with any kind of social dependency or power asymmetry, and we are convinced that gender and intersectionality perspectives bear the potential for challenging a whole series mainstream assumptions and grand narratives. Research within Research Area E will be conducted by PhD students, Postdoctoral researchers and senior academics. For a description of this research area, see <https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/program/research-areas/research-area-e-gender-and-intersectionality/description-of-ra-e>

In order to plan the future of Research Area E we would like to discuss different approaches with young and early career researchers from the fields of anthropology, archaeology, history, literary studies, gender studies, and other related fields who have experience with or a profound interest in the topic of asymmetrical dependencies and gender and/or intersectionality. We also encourage all participants to reflect on the concept of dependency. (For a working definition used by the Cluster of Excellence, see <https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/program/about> )

Contributions based on research from all over the world and all time periods are welcome, but the research must have a historical perspective. We welcome research on all periods and all regions, but we particularly encourage research on pre-modern and non-European societies. The invited scholar is expected to hold a max. 30 min. presentation.

Travel and accommodation costs will be covered by the University of Bonn.



Please send proposals with a short CV and summary (ca. 300 words) until 10 June to: [ResearchAreaE@dependency.uni-bonn.de](mailto:ResearchAreaE@dependency.uni-bonn.de).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## Call for Applications

*The Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies is currently calling for applications for:*

### **10 Research Associates (PhD Positions)**

The positions are initially limited for a period of three years (1 October 2019 to 30 September 2022), with the option of extending the contract for one year (3+1 years).

The successful candidates will be employed at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS): [https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en?set\\_language=en](https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en?set_language=en). In September 2018, the BCDSS was awarded the status of "Cluster of Excellence" by the German Research Council. We are therefore recruiting early-career researchers who are interested in contributing to an outstanding interdisciplinary and international research center. Research associates will get the opportunity to realize an individual research project within one of the BCDSS' Research Areas and to participate in the Center's graduate program.

The proposed individual projects may address any issue relevant to the study of "Slavery and Dependency", from any discipline respective to the chosen Research Area. Topics can therefore be of a wide variety – from micro studies to wide scale approaches, in any historical period or geographical region.

The application deadline is **31 May 2019**. Find all of the calls and information about the application procedure here: <https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/career>





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