

# DEPENDENT

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## INSTITUTIONALIZED DEPENDENCY: RULING THROUGH SOCIAL FORMS IN ANCIENT CHINA

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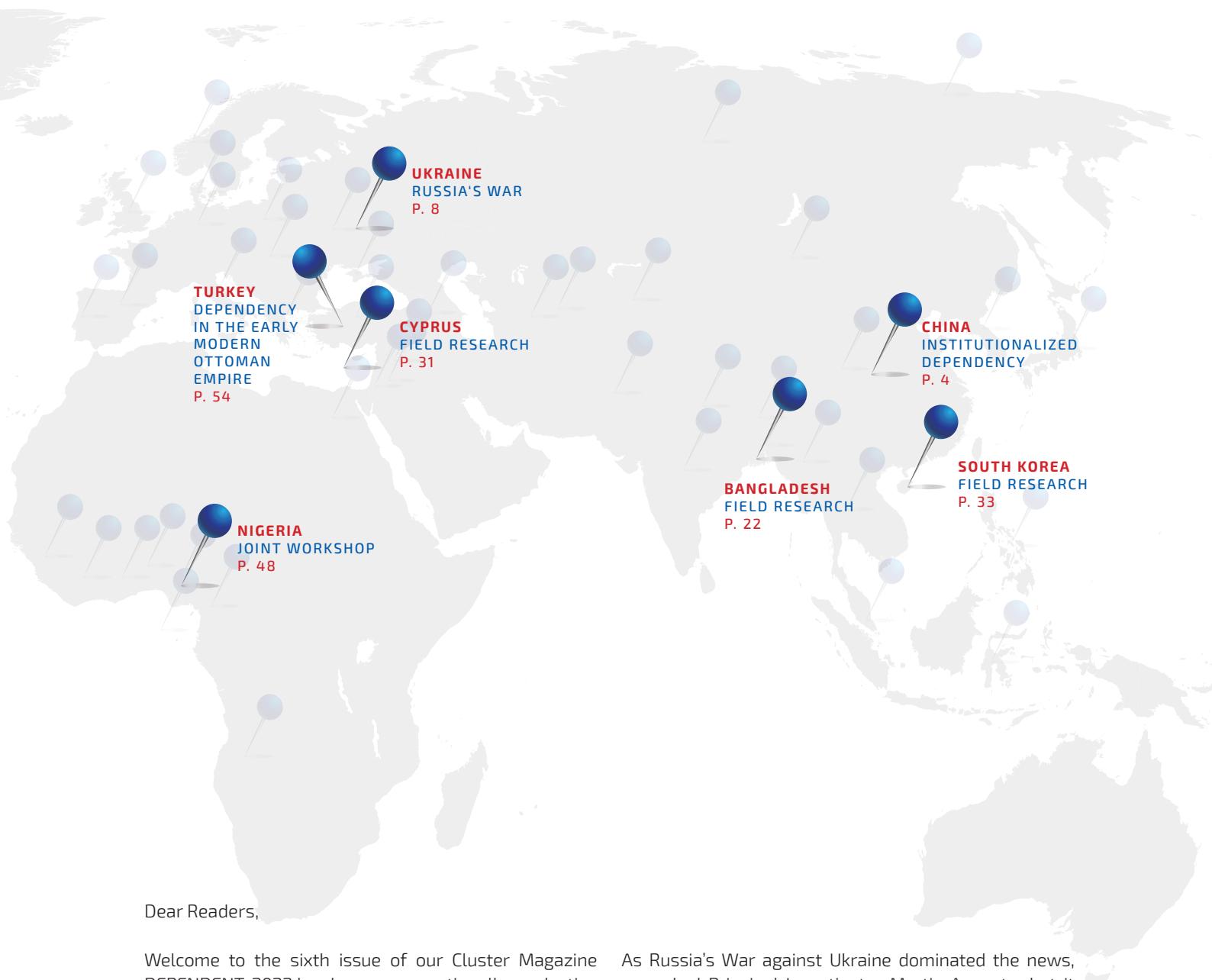
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[cover image]: 'Wooden slip' from the northwest of the Han Empire (206 BCE–220 CE), modern Gansu Province, containing the formal heading of a memorial. Its sender omits his family name and self-deprecatingly calls himself *fen tu chen* 粪土臣, "(Your) bond servant (standing on) defecated soil"



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the sixth issue of our Cluster Magazine DEPENDENT. 2022 has been an exceptionally productive year that has seen activity levels picking up speed after most of the Corona-related restrictions had been lifted. It resulted in increasing numbers of lectures, conferences and other events organized by the BCDSS. In this issue we shall be shedding light on research activities spanning across four continents and going back as far as to the second half of 2021. Some of our 2022 activities will be covered in the following issue of the DEPENDENT.

What to expect from this issue?

In our special focus on "Institutionalized Dependency in China", BCDSS Principal Investigator Christian Schwermann and postdoctoral researcher Paul Fahr (both Ruhr-Universität Bochum) will be taking you to ancient China to explore ways of "Ruling Through Social Forms". They will argue that modes of institutionalized dependency were not "isolated phenomena". Instead, they contributed to "pre-modern 'thought collectives' as a whole".

As Russia's War against Ukraine dominated the news, we asked Principal Investigator Martin August what it meant for Germany and the BCDSS. Dr. Andrii Bovgyria, senior researcher at the Institute of History of Ukraine, and Heinz Heinen Fellow from April to June 2022, gives us his personal account on being a refugee.

We look forward to lively exchange on any of the topics covered in this DEPENDENT issue. Remember you can join us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn if you like (see back cover for details). But for now, enjoy the read!

Wishing you all a happy, healthy, and productive year 2023

Cécile Jeblawei



# INSTITUTIONALIZED DEPENDENCY: RULING THROUGH SOCIAL FORMS IN ANCIENT CHINA



Rubbing of a stone relief from the Wu Family Shrine, modern Shandong Province, 148 CE. In the center, the minor King Cheng of the Western Zhou dynasty (r. 1042/35–1006 BCE) presides below a canopy held by one of his servants. To his left, his regent, the Duke of Zhou (r. 1042–1036 BCE), whom later writers have turned into an ideal minister and cultural role model, respectfully attends him. The scene shows how regional elites of the early Chinese empire envisaged the relationship between an ideal monarch and his competent advisors.

By Paul Fahr and  
Christian Schwermann

Strong asymmetrical relations of power do not merely structure societies. They do not simply 'occur' and force their subjects into variant modes of dependency. Rather, they provide intellectual as well as symbolic resources for understanding and putting into words how societies function in their entirety. This may be more evident in pre-modern societies than in modern ones.

Today, we preferably refer to bodies of legal rights and obligations when describing social order. Still, people continue to project "social forms" (*soziale Formen*, Georg Simmel [1858–1918]) governing the private realm, especially the family, onto other areas of social life such as the university – think, for example, of German *Doktormutter* and *Doktorvater* or *Hausberu-*



*fung* – or the political realm, which tends to teem with *founding fathers*, *foster fathers*, etc. In pre-modern times, such projections and the underlying intellectual operations, that is the formation of concepts of social order through semantic change, for example by way of metonymic or metaphoric derivation, were indeed essential, since many social relations were not governed by codified law. Accordingly, people had to resort to their society's basic social forms instead in order to explain why, for example, one should obey the monarch and, if necessary, sacrifice one's life to their cause. In this way, asymmetrical social forms transcended their primary participants and, at least conceptually, entered the higher echelons of society. Slavery and comparable modes of domination were not isolated phenomena that took place on the fringes of the social world. Rather, they shaped pre-modern "thought collectives" (*Denkkollektive*, Ludwik Fleck [1896–1961]) as a whole, as can be shown in the case of ancient China.

By the time of the first unified empire (221 BCE–220 CE), Chinese bureaucrats had developed a highly complex penal law, including procedural law, the remnants of which have been unearthed and studied

in the preceding decades. However, these regulations did not govern all relevant relations of power. To give just one example, elites, according to an often-quoted dictum, were supposed to be spared from corporal punishment. Rather, in case of serious misbehaviour, they were expected to commit suicide in order to evade legal procedures. This poses the question by which social form these people, but not only them, related to the head of state, that is the emperor or, occasionally, the ruling empress, since this relationship appears to have been insufficiently defined by law from a modern perspective.

The social form monarchs and their counsellors chose as a remedy was marked by severe asymmetrical dependency. Right after having unified the realm, the First Emperor (r. 221–210 BCE) had his elites declare publicly that now the emperor had "turned the whole empire into one single family" and that "wherever people set foot", everybody was "made a bondservant

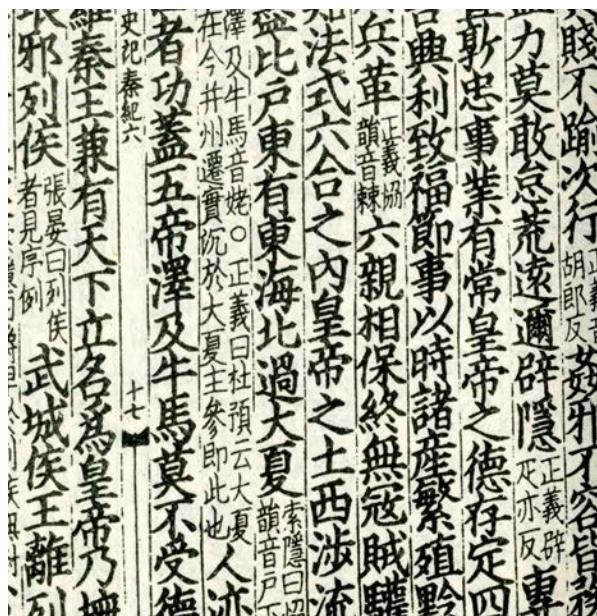
[of the emperor's aforementioned 'family']". Moreover, around the same time the First Emperor ordered that the common terms for private bondservants, which he had used in the above-mentioned public declarations of submission, should otherwise be replaced by a different terminology, turning the terms that had been common until then into exclusive designations for his imperial subjects. Henceforth, people, including leading bureaucrats, were obliged to refer to themselves as bondservants when addressing the monarch. Further, they were expected to refrain from using their private surname in order to signal that they belonged to the imperial 'family'.

Such naming practices may have contributed to the notorious impression that the Chinese monarchy was characterized by despotic rule. Had the Chinese emperors not literally 'enslaved' their people? Did this not prove that they ruled as masters over an empire replete with slaves, as authors like Montesquieu (1689–1755) in his *The Spirit of the Laws*, or, more recently, Karl August Wittfogel (1896–1988) in his *Oriental Despotism*, pictured it? When subjecting the relationship between the Chinese emperor and their people to closer scrutiny, the matter presents itself as much more intricate. The First Emperor and his advisors had projected a social form of severe asymmetrical dependency onto the level of imperial government. Here, however, it turned into a highly complex, ritually mediated institution of its own kind, which allowed for a considerable amount of agency on the side of the nominally subjugated.

First of all, according to common understanding, people were neither captured nor arrested by the emperor, but were rather expected to enter the described relation to their superior voluntarily. They could do so by – either in speaking or in writing – declaring themselves bondservants to them and having their personal name recorded in their new superior's register. In an entry in the imperial annals of the *The Documents of the Song* (*Songshu*) for the year 466 CE, e.g., just after a new emperor had ascended the throne, we read of a man being told by his son that "once [he] would hand in a memorial, [he] would be that person's bondservant", because in doing so he would need to declare himself as such towards the monarch and offer him his personal name. Common people did not have comparable choices at their disposal. Still, even they were expected to enroll in the tax registers by themselves, that is, symbolically, on their own agency.

On the other hand, people could formally declare themselves bondservants to a new emperor, but argue against serving them in office. After a powerful clan had usurped the throne in northern China in 265 CE, the new emperor asked an eminent scholar from modern day Sichuan to serve in the staff of his crown prince. In

a famous – though not very long – written reply, which has been transmitted in the *Selections of Refined Literature* (*Wenxuan*), this man used a first-person pseudo-pronoun derived from the noun originally meaning "bondservant" altogether 26 times to refer to himself, even going as far as calling himself a "debased captive of a lost state". Thereby, he assured his new lord of his full subordination. Still, at the same time, he explained that he needed to take care of his aged grandmother and could not yet serve in office. The emperor could not or did not wish to force him and even had him supplied with two real bondservants to support him in caring for his grandmother. Besides, this case shows that the meaning of the noun from which the pseudo-pronoun under discussion had been derived, could occasionally be reactivated in a subject's declaration of submission in order to achieve certain communicative goals.



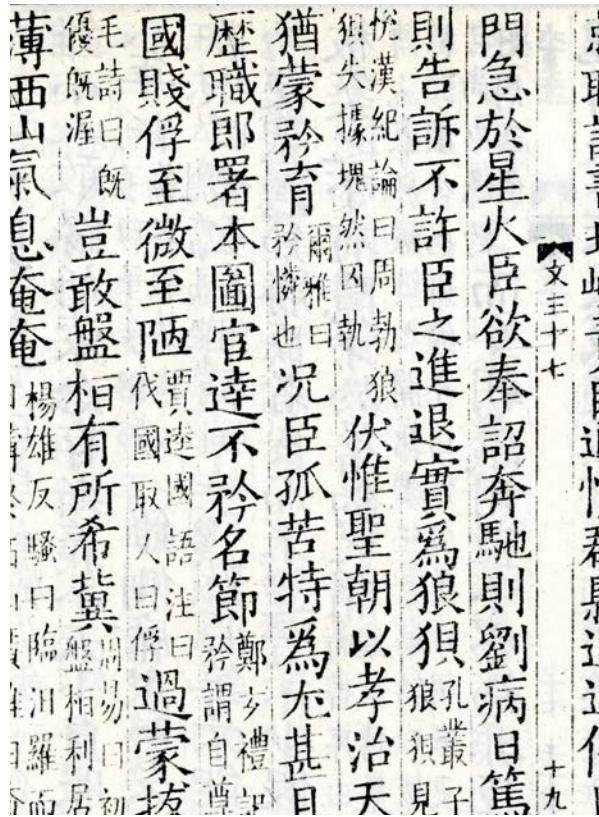
Facsimile of a Southern Song (1127-1279) edition of the *Records of the Scribes* (*Shiji*), a historiographical compendium authored by Sima Qian (c. 145-86 BCE) and his father Sima Tan (d. 110 BCE). The public proclamations celebrating the achievements of the First Emperor have survived for the most part only as quotations in this work. Immediately to the right of the smaller separating column on the left is the phrase *wu bu chen zhe* 無不臣者, "everybody has been made bondservant (of the emperor's 'family')".

Thirdly, at least officials could be asymmetrically dependent on another person next to their emperor, be it a superior in office or a regional king. Leading officials kept formal registers listing the names of their own subordinates, implying that these people were primarily dependent on themselves, not the monarch. During certain periods of time, the staff of formally invested regional kings referred to themselves as bondservants when addressing their superiors. In the sixth century CE, one emperor according to *The Documents of the Zhou* (*Zhoushu*) even complained that "since recent times, there exists a further malady: once someone has been subordinate (to another person) even for a

short while, they without hesitation ritually interact with each other like a master and his bondservant". Understandably, monarchs strove to monopolize the social form under discussion – reality, however, looked differently and people were quite aware of this.

Finally, and most importantly, the emperor did not rule unconditionally over their "bondservants". He or she may have been the head of the imperial 'family', consisting of him- or herself, their clan, and their subjects, conceptualized as servants and maids. The emperor represented the extended imperial 'family' vis-à-vis the highest celestial deity of "Heaven" (*Tian*) or foreign peoples and could pass his or her representative rights on to their sons or, occasionally, a successful usurper. However, the emperor's welfare was not above that of his or her 'family', or, as we today call it: 'dynasty'. If a monarch did not behave according to established precedents and conventions, he could be deposed and removed from the capital. In other words, the relationship between the emperor and his subjects was not marked by command and brute force, but by highly institutionalized forms of interaction, which could be violated by both sides.

This leads to another crucial question. According to Western understanding, 'slavery' is marked by the fact that the enslaved person turns into their master's property and thereby loses their personal liberty. To interpret the relationship between an early Chinese emperor and their subjects as a case of slavery, in other words, presupposes that subjects lost a liberty conceptualized as such because they were considered to be owned by someone else. It remains doubtful, however, whether both concepts – liberty and property – apply to the Chinese case. Concerning the notion of individual liberty, the matter becomes clear when one studies what corresponds to the Roman act of manumission. The emperor could indeed "erase (a servant's) name (from his registers)". Contrary to what may be expected, however, this did not imply that this person would be released into freedom. Rather, this act generally followed some serious misdemeanor on the side of the official and was considered a heavy punishment. As such, it was often accompanied by the delinquent's physical banishment, that is, their punitive transfer. According to one source, such a person was not even deemed qualified to address the monarch in writing. By releasing them from their status as "bondservants", people did not gain personal freedom and the right to communicate with the emperor on an equal footing, but lost their status as regular elements of the social order. There simply was no 'liberty' one could possibly have been 'manumitted' to. Prior to the late nineteenth century, when Western concepts were first introduced to China on a larger scale, the Chinese language did not even have a word for Florentinus' notion of liberty as,



Facsimile of a Southern Song (1127-1279) edition of the *Selections of Refined Literature (Wenxuan)*, a literary anthology compiled by Prince Xiao Tong (501-531) and his entourage. Beginning at the bottom of the fourth column from the left, there is the phrase *wangguo jianfu* 亡國賤俘, "debased captive of a lost state".

in Pierangelo Buongiorno's translation, "the natural power of doing whatever anyone wishes to do unless they are prevented in some way, by force or by law". (D. 1.5.4 [Florentinus 9 inst.]: "Libertas est naturalis facultas eius quod cuique facere libet, nisi si quid vi aut iure prohibetur.")

Likewise, it is questionable whether Chinese emperors 'owned' their subjects. In the historiographical record, we indeed occasionally read that some official's "body [did] not belong to themselves", but to the monarch. However, this – admittedly rare – phrase requires careful scrutiny. In early China, it was never applied by an emperor to one of his subjects. Rather servants applied it to themselves or to one another in order to demonstrate humility or solve some institutional problem. In the latter case, one court official argued that as a father one could not order one's own son to refuse to serve in office, because someone who did not even possess their own body could not dispose of the body of their offspring. Here, the concept of bondservantship, upon which the relation between emperor and subject was modelled, served as an intellectual resource which helped to answer a pressing question. Furthermore, it has been argued by Hou Xudong that by attaching their own name to something, people in ancient China did not claim ownership of the respective

object but responsibility for it. By analogy, we may surmise that by handing over one's own name and thus oneself to somebody else, one did not become that person's property. Rather, that person was thus vested with authority over their new subject as well as with responsibility for them.

Considering all these aspects together, it becomes clear that the social form that we have described as imperial bondservantship was a complex phenomenon. As such it should not be reduced to the literal meaning of the corresponding terms in the sources. Rather, these terms and the concepts they referred to constituted a highly institutionalized, even ritualized framework, which aided rulers and ruled in defining and negotiating their relationship to each other and thereby creating the social order as a whole. Unlike many modern rulers, Chinese emperors needed to establish social relationships with their subjects in order to rule them (compare Georg Simmel's notion of *Vergesellschaftung*). It is only by studying these relationships as social forms as well as their relation to other markedly asymmetrical forms like the nuclear family or actual bondservantship that we understand how these societies functioned. There is certainly still much uncharted territory ahead of us.



**Prof. Dr. Christian Schwermann**

is Professor of Chinese Language and Literature at Ruhr University Bochum and Principal Investigator of the BCDSS. He researches classical Chinese language and literature, historical semantics, and early Chinese political thought, with particular attention to the economic aspects of dependency in Early China (ca. 1200 to 200 B.C.E.). Christian Schwermann is author of "Dummheit in altchinesischen Texten: Eine Begriffsgeschichte" ["Stupidity" in Early Chinese Texts: A Conceptual History] (2011), and coeditor of four monographs, currently coediting the *Thesaurus Linguae Sericae* (2020-) together with Christoph Harbsmeier and Christian Wittern.



**Dr. Paul Fahr**

is postdoctoral researcher at the Faculty of East Asian Studies at the Ruhr University Bochum. In his dissertation he explored the concept of dynastic rule in early imperial China, focusing in particular on the institution of remonstrance and its treatment in early historiography. Currently, he is working on a DFG funded project on meritocratic and dynastic claims to power in medieval China, with special emphasis on usurpation and rituals of abdication. Photo by Rüdiger Breuer, Bochum.

# RUSSIA'S WAR AGAINST UKRAINE

and what it means for Germany  
and the BCDSS

by Martin Aust

For six months now - this text is written in August 2022 - Russia has been waging a criminal war of aggression against Ukraine. Russia has committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in Ukraine. There is evidence for the crime of genocide in statements from the Russian leadership and the actions of Russian units in occupied areas of Ukraine. Germany provides Ukraine with extensive financial and humanitarian assistance. However, Germany has so far fulfilled its pledges of comprehensive military assistance to Ukraine only in very small numbers and piecemeal. Nonetheless, Ukraine's internal nation-building continues to advance amid its so far highly successful military defense. The distorted image of an internally torn Ukraine, divided between West and East, which has seemed untenable since the Maidan of 2004 and even more so since the Euromaidan of 2013/14, finally belongs into the dustbin of history.

by Martin Aust

Germany has a special historical responsibility in all of this. Ukraine experienced two heavy German occupations in the 20th century. In the First World War, the German Empire did indeed favor the founding of the Ukrainian state in February 1918. However, the Supreme Army Command saw Ukraine primarily as a region whose resources would benefit German warfare against the Western powers. Exploitation, not sovereignty, was the overriding imperative of German Ukraine policy in 1918. In World War II, all of Soviet Ukraine fell under German occupation as part of the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. Again, German occupiers saw Ukraine as a country to exploit for German warfare. This time, however,



the exploitation was accompanied by the German war of extermination against the Soviet Union. In many places in Ukraine, mass shootings of Jews took place in the Holocaust by bullets, in which the SS, Wehrmacht and Ukrainian collaborators cooperated. German terror turned relentlessly against the civilian population in Ukraine. Millions of Ukrainians were deported to Germany for forced labor. Thousands of Ukrainian villages were burned and destroyed by the Germans along with their inhabitants. In 2022, it is upsetting to hear stories from people from Ukraine who experienced the German invasion in 1941 as children and are now hit by the Russian invasion as elderly people.

For the dependency research of the BCDSS, this results in several perspectives. The history of forced laborers in Germany, including Ukrainian forced laborers, has still not been fully researched. At the same time, Russia's war against Ukraine draws attention to forms of dependency that have not yet been in the focus of the BCDSS. Between looking at social dependency and at humanity's global ecological dependency on the ecosystem of planet Earth, this opens up a view of

the negotiation of dependency in the field of tension between imperial heritage, neo-imperial policies and post-colonial critique. The Russian leadership around Vladimir Putin has not abandoned an imperial nostalgia. It is now converting the memory of Russia's imperial past into a neo-imperial policy that denies Ukraine's right to exist as a state and nation. The defence of Ukraine against Russia's war of aggression adds another chapter to the long history of confrontations between empires and nations.

In Germany, on the other hand, the public is divided. One half is in favor of supporting Ukraine, even with heavy weapons. Another part, visible in the group of authors of several open letters, urges a quick negotiation with Russia on a ceasefire and a peacemaking compromise. This proposal claims for itself the wisdom of political realpolitik and ethics of responsibility. The goal, it says, is to bring an end to the violence as quickly as possible. However, it overlooks the fact that Russian occupation rule after an end to military fighting does not mean an end to violence. The news from Butcha and Irpin has shown in all clarity how, after the end of military fighting, Russian terror is directed against the civilian population. Moreover, the very existence of Ukraine as a state and nation cannot be compromised. Last, but not least, there is an unspoken imperial logic underlying the proposal. Great powers like Russia are granted the right to dispose of the territory and populations of neighboring states. Prussia and Germany practiced such a policy in cooperation with the Tsarist Empire and, from 1939 to 1941, with the Soviet Union - at the expense of Poland-Lithuania during the partition period from 1772 to 1918 and at the expense of all of Eastern Europe after the Hitler-Stalin Pact. A historical lesson of Germany should be not to agree to policies of great powers at the expense of societies in Eastern Europe and in this case specifically Ukraine. The political dependence that empires and neo-imperial policies create should not be supported by Germany.



**Prof. Dr. Martin Aust**

is Professor of History and Culture of Eastern Europe and Russia at the University of Bonn and BCDSS Principal Investigator, having held positions at CAU Kiel, LMU Munich and University of Regensburg. His latest book publications: *Die Russische Revolution. Vom Zarenreich zum Sowjetimperium* (C.H. Beck, Munich 2017). *Die Schatten des Imperiums. Russland seit 1991* (C.H. Beck, Munich 2019). *Erinnerungsverantwortung. Deutschlands Vernichtungskrieg und Besatzungsherrschaft im östlichen Europa 1939 - 1945* (bpb, Bonn 2021). Co-author of *Osteuropa vom Mauerfall bis zum Ukrainekrieg. Besichtigung einer Epoche* (suhrkamp, Berlin 2022).



# HISTORY THROUGH THE EYES OF A UKRAINIAN HISTORIAN AND REFUGEE

by Andrii Bovgyria

**"Russia's invasion of Ukraine triggered the biggest conflict on the European continent since World War II, causing a humanitarian catastrophe in Ukraine with thousands of victims and millions of refugees. My family and I shared the fate of many of our compatriots. Having gone abroad for a short vacation for a few days on the eve of the war, we could no longer return home, we became refugees without a real perspective for the near future."**

by Andrii Bovgyria

Fortunately, thanks to the support of German colleagues, the German scientific community, which actively supports Ukrainian scholars seeking asylum in Germany, I was awarded a scholarship by the BCDSS for the period of April-June 2022. Therefore, my family and I were given an opportunity to stay in Bonn, enjoying the hospitality of the BCDSS. I was also offered to continue my research, which had been interrupted by the war.



My research interests include the history of Ukraine in the 17th and 18th centuries. During my stay in Bonn, I started writing a monograph devoted to the construction of identity in early modern Ukraine. The text will address the ethnogenetic myth, as well as other markers of identity, i.e. the perception and idea of "own land", mental geography, pantheon of heroes and anti-heroes, representation of the historical past,



ideas about "others" – representatives of non-ethnic and non-confessional groups, faith, language etc. The main idea of the monograph is to show that during the century of the existence of the autonomous Ukrainian Cossack state, its elite formulated an ideology, identity, and a powerful historical myth based on the rich inheritance of previous centuries of history and culture on the lands that today form Ukraine. This myth became a commanding narrative in the shaping of modern Ukrainian identity during the 19th century, during the formation of the modern Ukrainian national state. Therefore, the Ukrainian idea is not a recent creation, as modern Russian propaganda claims, according to which Ukrainians existed and exists only in the imagination of a few nationalist ideologues.

My interests also include political crimes in the Ukrainian Hetmanate of the 17th and 18th centuries. The monograph devoted to this topic was about to be published in Ukraine before the start of the war. However, I am now planning to study further aspects not yet included in the book, many of which are directly related to topics covered by the BCDSS. They focus on forced labor in the Russian Empire, which was used

as a punishment for Ukrainians accused of political crimes, such as insulting the monarch's honor, manifestations of opposition to imperial policies, etc. Convicts were condemned to forced labor in Siberia, the Ural mines, to construction work for the new capital of St. Petersburg, and for canals and fortresses on the Crimean border, Dagestan, and Lake Onega. In essence, it was slave labor with a high mortality rate, which also involved numerous unconvicted representatives of the Cossack army and inhabitants of Ukrainian autonomy.

During the three months spent at the BCDSS, I managed not only to advance the preparation of my monograph significantly, but also to participate in several online conferences held in Braunschweig, Colgate University (Hamilton, USA), Bratislava (Slovakia), and Warsaw (Poland).

As a listener, I was lucky enough to be present at conferences organized by the BCDSS, devoted to various issues of slavery in antiquity. Although this topic is far from my research interests, I was impressed by the high level of organization, participants, and the high quality of the presentations. It seems incredible to see how one could gather a significant number of highly qualified historians on such rather specialized forums.

Professional communication with Professor Christoph Witzenrath, a specialist in the history of early modern Russia, and Stanislav Mohylny, a doctoral student at the center who researches the subject of serfdom in Ukraine in the 18th century, was extremely important for me during my scholarship. This communication greatly enriched my research outlook and opened new perspectives in my studies.

My family and I are very grateful to the BCDSS for the wonderful opportunity to be part of the university community. We express our sincere gratitude to the management and staff of the Center for their support, hospitality and assistance we enjoyed over the past months.



**Dr. Andrii Bovgyria**

is Senior Researcher at the Institute of History of Ukraine, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, and was Heinz Heinen Fellow at the BCDSS from April to June 2022. He is a historian of the early modern period in Eastern Europe with a specific focus on the history of Ukraine, Russia, and Poland in the 17th and 18th centuries. His research focuses on the construction of identity, on social history, and on political crimes in the Ukrainian Hetmanate.

# NEWS

## WHO IS WHO AT THE BCDSS MANAGEMENT TEAM

[www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/people/management](http://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/people/management)



## NEW AT THE CLUSTER

### New Fellows



**Rosamund Eileen Fitzmaurice**  
10/2022 – 03/2023  
Indigenous forced labour and dependency in Postclassic Mesoamerica  
([ca. CE 900 – 1521](#))



**Cristina Mocanu**  
10/2022 – 03/2023  
Productive and reproductive labor of Roma slaves in Moldavia (before 1830s)



**Julie Miller**  
10/2022 – 09/2023  
*Bonn-Yale-Anton-Wilhelm-Amo-Fellow*  
A History of the Person in America



### New Doctoral Students



**Bahar Bayraktaroglu**  
01/2022  
Slavery, Violence, and **Crime** in the Ottoman Empire



**Diego Schibelski**  
01/2022  
Sailing a Hidden **Atlantic**: Slave Ship Crews during the Age of Abolition (1807-1867)



### Research Group Leader



#### Raquel Razente Sirotti

is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory in Frankfurt. She investigates the notion of "mutual dependencies" in African colonial legal history, with a special focus on Lusophone Africa. In her current research project, she deals with the relationship between labor, punishment, and governance in Mozambique, more specifically in territories formerly governed by charter companies.

## New Investigators



### Prof. Dr. Christian Blumenthal

is Professor for New Testament Exegesis and Dean of Studies at the University of Bonn. The main focus of his research is God in early Jewish and New Testament, Theology and Narrative, Synoptic conceptions of the basileia, rediscovering ancient translations, and political reading of the New Testament.



### Prof. Dr. Jan Dietrich

is Professor of Literary and Religious History of the Old Testament at the University of Bonn. In his research, he focuses on the history of ideas of autonomy, liberty, and freedom and how they have emerged out of and developed within contexts of dependencies in ancient Israel and the ancient Near East.



### Prof. Dr. Lewis Doney

is Professor of Tibetology at the University of Bonn. His research focus lies on the pre-modern social status, daily lived experience and self-identity of Tibetans and those with whom Tibetans interacted within the wider Central Asian milieu, focusing on people at the borders of the Tibetan Empire (c. 600–850 CE). He also researches the later cultural effects of Buddhist literary depictions of the imperial period.



### PD Dr. Dorothea Heuschert-Laage

is 'Privatdozentin' at the Institute of Oriental and Asian Studies works on different forms of dependency in Mongolian societies and approaches this topic from a legal history perspective. She is especially interested in the inter-linking of the law of the Qing state (1636–1911) with practices and normative knowledge at the local level.



### Petra Linscheid

is Research Associate at the Department of Christian Archaeology in the project "Kontextil". She investigates "textile dependencies" among Early Byzantium and the Franks. In the 5th-7th centuries AD Byzantium possessed materials, knowledge and technologies that were not available in the Latin West and which led to an imitation of Byzantine objects by the Franks.



### Sabine Meyer

is Professor of American Studies and Co-Director of the North American Studies Program at the University of Bonn. Her research focuses on Native American writing and law/politics from the nineteenth century onward, on representations of Native Americans/Indigenous people in North American popular culture and on the history of social movements, (forced) migration and processes of identity formation in the United States.



### Kirsten Schäfers

is a Tenured Lecturer (Akademische Rätin a.Z.) at the Department of Old Testament Studies, Faculty of Catholic Theology at the University of Bonn. In her research project "(Inter-)Dependency? Human-Divine Relationships in the Hebrew Bible" she investigates the constructions of dependency in human-divine relationships in the textual corpus of the Hebrew Bible and its Ancient Near Eastern contexts. Her research particularly explores the limitations of divine agency within the framework of human-divine interactions.

## Upcoming Fellowship Opportunities with the BCDSS

### Heinz Heinen Kolleg – Center for Advanced Study

#### Call for Applications for 10 Fellowships for the academic year 2023/2024

Apply by March 15, 2023  
[application@dependency.uni-bonn.de](mailto:application@dependency.uni-bonn.de)

For any enquiries, contact Laura Hartmann  
[l.hartmann@dependency.uni-bonn.de](mailto:l.hartmann@dependency.uni-bonn.de)



### The Bonn-Yale-Anton-Wilhelm-Amo-Fellowship

#### Call for Applications for the academic year 2023/2024

Apply by April 15, 2023  
[application@dependency.uni-bonn.de](mailto:application@dependency.uni-bonn.de)

For any enquiries, contact Laura Hartmann  
[l.hartmann@dependency.uni-bonn.de](mailto:l.hartmann@dependency.uni-bonn.de)



### BCDSS Reading and Discussion Series



Natassa Sideri with Prof. Marion Gymnich and PhD researcher David B. Smith

## (UN-) ABHÄNGIGE ANSICHTEN

### (IN-)DEPENDENT VIEWS

Twice annually, we invite authors and other creative minds who we think contribute to the cluster's dependency and slavery discourse, to the University of Bonn. They read from their texts or have passages read out and discuss their ideas with members of the cluster as well as members of the public. The readings and discussions are particularly designed as outreach events to encourage mutual discourse and public engagement.

In July 2022, IRIS DÄRMANN - Professor of Cultural Theory and Cultural Aesthetics at Humboldt University Berlin - presented passages from her acclaimed book '**Undienlichkeit, Gewaltgeschichte und Politische Philosophie**' (Matthes und Seitz, Berlin 2020) at the University of Bonn and discussed various forms of '**Undienlichkeit**' (unserviceability) as a means of resistance to political violence.



Prof. Iris Därmann with Prof. Antweiler und Prof. Münch

The event was followed by a second reading and discussion evening, this time with Greek playwright NATASSA SIDERI in November 2022. Her award-winning play "**BOUND**" ('**GEFESSELT**') addressed the problem of debt bondage in our present-day society, one of the most widely-spread forms of strong asymmetric dependency.

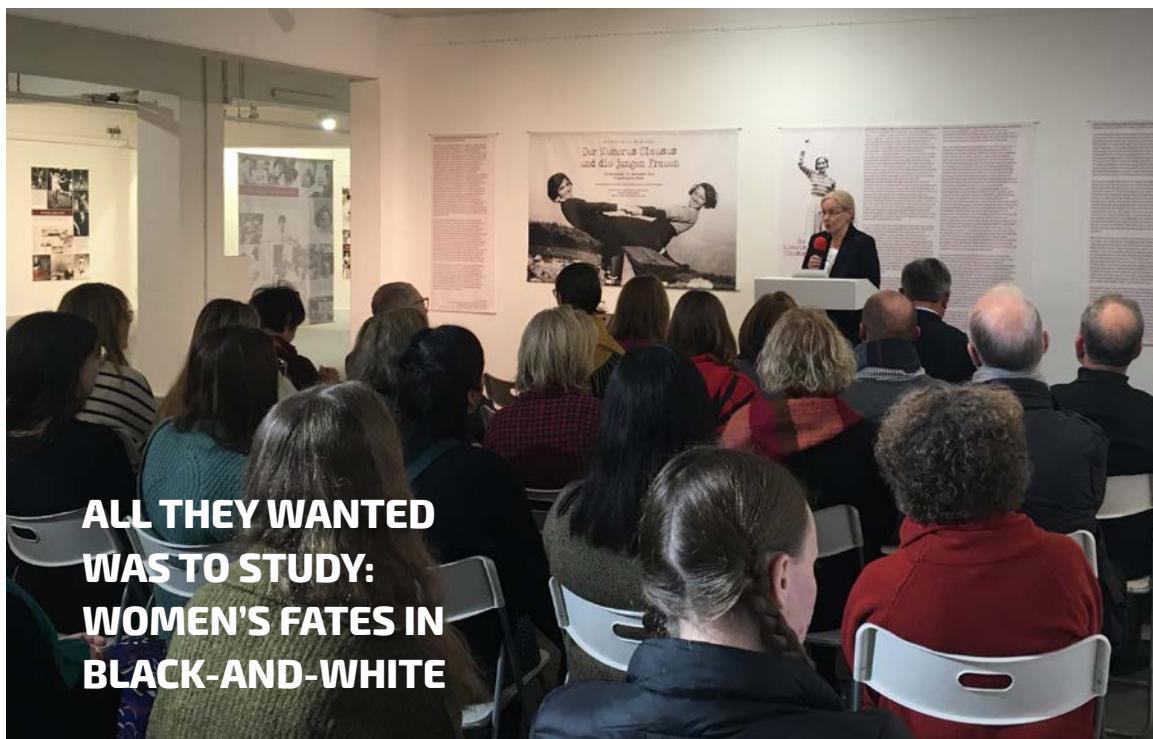
Natassa Sideri welcomed the Cluster's interest in her play while listening to PhD researchers reading out passages of her play. Working with the Cluster "had opened up new perspectives on her own play".

**MORE ABOUT THE  
READING AND  
DISCUSSION SERIES**



**NATASSA SIDERI'S  
IMPRESSIONS OF THE  
JOINT EVENT**





BCDSS Co-Speaker Prof. Marion Gymnich welcoming visitors to the Frauenmuseum on November 22, 2022.

**A NEW BCDSS EXHIBITION ON ACADEMIC ANTISEMITISM IN 1920s HUNGARY  
in COOPERATION WITH THE WOMEN'S MUSEUM ('FRAUENMUSEUM') IN BONN**



The new exhibition at the Frauenmuseum Bonn focuses on young Hungarian Jewish women whose lives were fundamentally altered by the introduction of the so-called "Numerus Clausus law" in 1920. Based on family memories, historical documents and photographs, the exhibition brings to life the fates and achievements of women born in the first quarter of the twentieth century. It also shows the influence the law had on the women's movement and Jewish assimilation.

Launched at the 2b Gallery, Budapest, in August 2021, the exhibition has been adopted by the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) for the Women's Museum Bonn. It originates from a research project on "Academic antisemitism, women's emancipation, and Jewish assimilation" by Judith Szapor of McGill University, Montreal, which was funded by the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council via a Canada Insight Grant.



The exhibition runs from 20 November to 08 January 2023.



FIND MORE  
INFORMATION ON  
OUR EXHIBITION  
WEBSITE:



WATCH A CLIP FROM  
THE EXHIBITION  
OPENING:



Exhibition opening at Frauenmuseum Bonn, November 22, 2022.

## Interview with Prof. Bodó



**“** The form their resistance took, whether they were successful in defending the achievements of Jewish and female emancipation, whether they were able to escape or at least mitigate the terms of strong asymmetrical dependency, is the subject of this exhibition. **”**

## THE END OF THE LIBERAL ERA AND THE BEGINNING OF OFFICIAL ANTI-SEMITISM

**Béla Bodó, BCDSS Investigator and Associate Professor for Eastern European History at the Institute of History at the University of Bonn, on why the exhibition is relevant to the BCDSS**

Since the mid-nineteenth century, an unwritten assimilation social contract, set by the Hungarian political elite, regulated the relationship between the Jewish middle class and the Hungarian social and political elite. Because they brought in capital and badly needed skills as merchants and modern professionals, Jews were permitted, indeed, encouraged by the political elite, to settle in the country in large numbers. Identifying as Hungarians, assimilated Jews were also crucial to maintain a Hungarian majority and the supremacy of the traditional Hungarian political elite in the multi-ethnic Kingdom of Hungary. The assimilationist social contract promised Jews economic success, upward social mobility, social acceptance, equal rights and protection against violent antisemitism. In return, Jews were expected to contribute to the modernization of the country, assimilate quickly and fully into Hungarian culture and uncritically support the Hungarian national cause. The "gentlemen's agreement" stood

to benefit both parties and made the two groups mutually dependent on each other. However, it was the traditional social and political elite, that not only had set the terms of the assimilationist social contract but continued to have the upper hand, and the power to violate and change its terms. The relationship between the two groups thus could be best described as "asymmetrical dependency": the type of relationship that has been the focus of research at the Bonn Center of Slavery and Dependency Studies.

The First World War and the post-war chaos and left-wing revolutions increased tensions between the two parties, tensions that had already been noticeable in 1914. High unemployment, temporary overcrowding at the universities, and resentment over the alleged Jewish backing of the democratic regime and the Communist experiment, combined with the rising tide of antifeminism, convinced the social and political elite to change the terms of the assimilationist social contract. Under heavy pressure by extremists organized into paramilitary groups and nationalist student fraternities, the political elite passed the infamous numerus clausus legislation of September 1920, which drastically reduced the share of Jewish students and women at Hungarian institutions of higher learning. The new law had a serious impact on Jewish youth, especially on Jewish women, who lived in a relationship of what could be described as "double asymmetrical dependency."

This exhibition sheds light on the lives of young women who were directly impacted by the law. It examines the ways in which they tried to circumvent the law, and defend and assert their autonomy, both as individuals and members of their community, be that social, cultural, political, or religious.

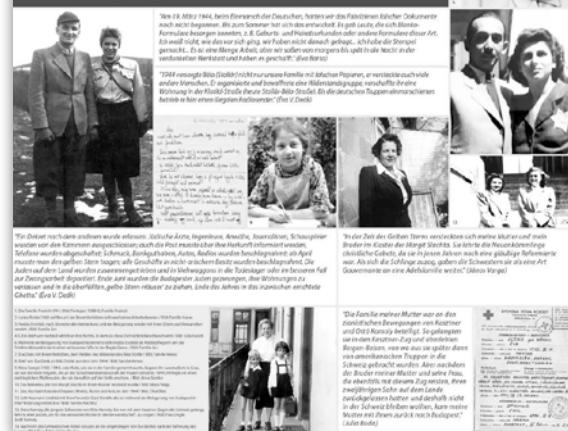
### **Extracts from the exhibition catalogue:**



Die zum Studium ins Ausland gegangen sind



### Verfolgung, Widerstand, Versteck



Prof. Dr. Béla Bodó

is Associate Professor for Eastern European History at the Institute of History at the University of Bonn and Investigator at the BCDSS. His current research revolves around the issue of the dependency of Jews on the state and the political and social elites in East-Central Europe after 1848 to achieve integration and defeat antisemitism. He received the Studies Association's book prize for his monograph "White Terror: Antisemitic and Political Violence in 1918-1921" (Routledge 2019).

## NEW WORKING GROUP

### “DIVERSITY AND DEPENDENCY”

“Why diversity matters in research and development”, such was the title of the public lecture held by Heinz Heinen Senior Fellow Professor Chioma Daisy Onyige on September 15, 2022. It kickstarted the call for the new working group “Diversity and Dependency”, initiated by a number of cluster members.

In her lecture, Professor Onyige drew attention to the fact that over a century ago, nearly all researchers were white and men. Researchers and research participants were primarily white men as well. Research serves as a means of finding novel, state-of-the art, pioneering, and advanced ways to improve different systems spanning across multiple disciplines of study.

While most of these problems of under-representation in research have diminished to some extent in modern times, we still have a lot of work to do. With regard to research, researchers and research participants, diversity is greatly lacking, but results are usually assumed to be generalizable to everyone. Representation matters when it comes to research and development. While there is a common understanding surrounding the importance of research, the presentation highlighted the importance of diversity within research and development.

Why diversity matters to Dependency and Slavery Studies was highlighted earlier this year by four BCDSS doctoral researchers, who presented various aspects of diversity and dependency at a poster exhibition during the University of Bonn International Diversity Day on May 30, 2022. Their exemplary research offers a glimpse of the depth of entanglement between diversity and dependency in research:


UNIVERSITÄT BONN

BONN CENTER  
FOR DEPENDENCY  
AND SLAVERY  
STUDIES

## DIVERSITY: Why Dependency and Slavery Studies Matter

At the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) humanities and social science researchers from more than 25 countries explore the phenomenon of slavery and other forms of strong asymmetrical dependencies. Our inclusive approach opens up new perspectives on social dependencies across all time periods, cultural contexts, and geographic locations. This poster showcases exemplary research by four of our PhD candidates.

**“How Come There’re No ‘Brothers’ on the Wall of Fame?”**

My dissertation explores Spike Lee’s cinematic representation of the legacy of slavery in current U.S. social relations. His classic film *Do the Right Thing* (1989) depicts the symbolic struggles among dominated groups—mainly Blacks and Italian Americans—in New York City. The struggle over the admission of Blacks to a local pizzeria is Italian American. The wall of fame highlighting one of the key questions raised in Lee’s works: How does systemic racism continue to operate in a neoliberal society that celebrates diversity?

Luvena Kopp, Researcher at the BCDSS

**‘Slavery’ in Selected Narratives of Nineteenth-Century Recaptured West Africans**

My research aims at giving a voice to and bringing out of obscurity the narratives of nineteenth-century recaptured West Africans, whose life stories have been forgotten in the archives. What can these narratives about the experiences of West Africans tell us about being set free from European slave ships tell us about slavery(ies) and asymmetrical dependency(ies)? And how can these writings discursively construct these questions? These writings refer on other forms of unfreedom in these writings address issues such as social relations, power dynamics and agency.

My research will explore the autobiographies, biographies, letters, and testimonies of the recaptives, with the aim of finding answers to these questions.

Mary Aderonke Afolabi Adeolu, Researcher at the BCDSS

**Female Slave Owners and Enslaved Women: Voices from the Roman Household**

My project sheds light on the relationships between slaves and women: two groups that Roman society, characterized by both slavery and patriarchy, labelled as ‘others’. They were regarded as ambiguous outliers, potentially dangerous, yet indispensable for the smooth running of the house. But what happened when a slave was also a woman and her enslaver was a female slaveholder?

My research analyses the female face of slavery and slaveholding power, focusing on the relations between women of different status that shaped the Roman domestic hierarchy. In order to delineate this aspect of the household’s daily life, I draw on Roman inscriptions, which uniquely convey the voices of ancient women – both free and slave.

Giulia Cappucci, Researcher at the BCDSS

**Enduring Antagonisms - Spanish Gypsies in History**

Ever since the proclamation in 1499 of a Royal Decree compelling Spanish gitanos to find a known trade and bind themselves to a lord or pain of being enslaved, this social group has created a refractory culture of resistance that places them on the margins of Spanish society.

In my research I explore the effects of the Royal Decree and similar laws. I look at royal dictums, cultural practices and mechanisms of discrimination in the history of Spain likely to have prevented the social inclusion of gitanos, and contributed to the creation of this minority as an imagined antagonist group.

Susana Macías Pascua, Researcher at the BCDSS

**SEE THE POSTER IN FULL SIZE**



**Luvena Kopp** looked at Spike Lee's cinematic representation of the legacy of slavery in current U.S. social relations.

**Mary Aderonke Afolabi-Adeolu** explored slavery in selected narratives of Nineteenth-Century recaptured West Africans.

**Giulia Cappucci** investigated female slave owners and enslaved women in the Ancient Roman household.

**Susana Macías Pascua** examined the enduring antagonisms experienced by Spanish "Gitanos" in history.

To explore more topics, discourses, and current debates related to the study of dependency and diversity, you are cordially invited to join the new working group "Diversity and Dependency."

### What's the working group about?

For a start, the working group will be offering some reading sessions on "Critical Race Theory: Interdisciplinary Perspectives", led by postdoctoral researcher James Harland and Cluster Professor Pia Wiegmink.

However, the concept of the working group is designed to be dynamic and shall be shaped by its participants. To find out more, to participate or, if you like, suggest any topics or speakers, or to voice any ideas, please get in touch with Pia Wiegmink ([wiegmink@uni-bonn.de](mailto:wiegmink@uni-bonn.de)).



### Prof. Dr. Chioma Daisy Onyige

is a Professor of Criminology at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Currently she is a Heinz Heinen Senior Fellow at the Cluster of Excellence "Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery studies", University of Bonn, Germany. Her research area includes gender and crime, environmental sociology, gender and climate change, and cognate issues such as conflict and peace building. Her current research is on contemporary slavery studies, specifically on human trafficking and smuggling of women and children from Africa to Europe. She is a fellow of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland; A fellow of the Rachel Carson Centre (RCC) for Environment and Society, Munich, Germany; A fellow of the African Science Leadership Programme (ASLP), University of Pretoria, South Africa; A Commonwealth Fellow of the University of Oxford, UK; a fellow of the Global Young Academy (GYA), German National Academy of Sciences, Leopoldina, Germany; and a Fellow, Kate Hamburger Kolleg "Law as Culture" Center for Advanced studies, University of Bonn, Germany.

## BCDSS TEACHING RESOURCES ON ANCIENT SLAVERY

### A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR GERMAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Reaching out to schools forms a crucial part of our outreach activities. BCDSS members Konrad Vössing and Maja Baum, together with Peter Geiss (Didactics of History, Bonn University), developed a collection of primary sources, interpretations and didactic suggestions, designed as a practical guide for German secondary schools.

The publication comes in timely for secondary schools in Berlin where, as of 2023, "Slavery in Antiquity" will form an integral part of their "Zentralabitur", i.a. secondary school leaving examinations. If not already planned, the new guide should encourage more federal states in Germany to follow suit.

Drawing on current scholarly discussions, the authors provide access to current questions and selected ancient sources on slavery in antiquity. The aim is to offer hands-on guidance and advice rather than a comprehensive selection of ready-made teaching material. Teachers are enabled to develop their own teaching concept and learning material through a targeted and problem-oriented exploration of the subject.

Any lesson plans included in this dossier are samples intended to serve as guidance.



Out now!



MORE INFORMATION  
ON OUR SCHOOL  
TEACHING  
RESOURCES  
WEBPAGE



# FIELD RESEARCHERS' REPORTS





As they investigate **strong asymmetrical dependency**, our scholars go beyond the study of written records. They travel to the regions they research in order to scrutinize historical sources and artefacts. They also conduct interviews with experts and communicate with local people. In the following pages, the scholars share impressions from their historical, archaeological or anthropological field research.

Due to the ease on corona restrictions in many regions around the world, 2021/22 was extensively used to catch up on research trips. However, many projects had to be altered significantly. Health and safety of all was and is of particular concern to us.

**“NOW I KNOW  
WHAT IT MEANS  
TO BE A REFUGEE”**

Bhasan-char island as of 2021, birds-eye view.

## **REVISITING REFUGEEHOOD, HUMANITARIAN TOURISM AND SYSTEMIC DEPENDENCY IN BHASANCHAR ISLAND OF BANGLADESH**

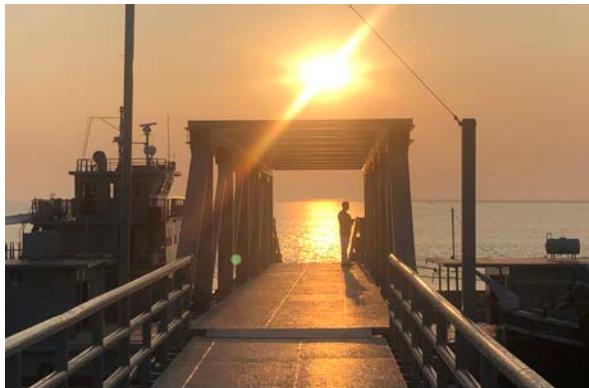
by Anas Ansar

### **BANGLADESH, JUNE - AUGUST 2021**

Even twenty years back, there was no existence of Bhasanchar, the flat and featureless island in the Bay of Bengal. Formed by sediment at the mouth of Bangladesh's Meghna River, it emerged from the sea as one of a myriad of shifting, unstable islands, or 'chars' as they're known locally, and eventually got the name Bhasanchar by the local fishermen. (Bhasanchar literally means 'Floating Island'). Two hours by boat from mainland Bangladesh, the low-lying island has been long thought to be uninhabitable due to its vulnerability to cyclones and floods and heavy ocean waves. Under the supervision of the Bangladesh Navy, British and Chinese engineers were engaged in a contentious



Our journey begins with the Bangladesh navy Ship BNS Timi



**The entrance of the island**

project that over the years transformed this far-off island into a camp to shelter up to 100,000 Rohingya refugees. As of February 2022, nearly 22,000 Rohingyas have been relocated to this island by the Bangladesh government.

Travelling to this *Island in the spotlight* was perhaps the most remarkable experience during my fieldwork in Bangladesh in the winter of 2021. In this article, I will attempt to address three different aspects of my visit: the onerous sea voyage and the associated conditions; reflections on my encounter with relocated Rohingya refugees, and observation on 'humanitarian tourism' by the employees of NGOs and international NGOs (INGOs) operating in the island. Finally, I will shed light on how the manifold constraints in Bhasanchar island have further intensified the pre-existing systemic dependency in the everyday lives of the exiled Rohingya community.

#### **BLATANT SOCIAL HIERARCHY IN THE SEA**

After a long-negotiated and complicated permission procedure from the office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), I have got the opportunity to travel to Bhasanchar in the middle of December 2021. I was permitted only for a week and had to follow a strict travel plan provided by the RRRC office. On a foggy morning, the navy ship sailed off to the sea from Chattogram Seaport, the busiest seaport on the Bay of Bengal, on a three-hour journey to the island. On board were NGO and INGO workers (a good number of them were expatriates), government officials, journalists, refugees, and stocks of medical and food ration supplies for the inhabitants in the island. The core group among the travellers was a small group of refugees who were en route to the island for the first time. The journalists from national and international media were paying a visit to the island under the Bangladesh government's sponsorship. The purpose is - well you may have guessed it! Lastly, almost omnipresent, the security officials from Bangladesh Navy and coastguards were literally in every corner of the ship.



**The forward protection guard of the island**

The upper deck of the ship consists of a VIP restaurant, proper toilet facilities and sightseeing scopes: all of these restricted to journalists, UN workers and their local colleagues only. The lower deck, which was crowded with as many people as would fit, reserved for us, the local NGO workers and the Rohingya refugees. During these three hours of the journey, while the travellers in the upper deck were having a lavish breakfast with hot tea and coffee, the people on the lower deck were in a long queue to use the only available toilet for them. There was no proper sitting arrangement and no food canteen. Such discrimination was not only in stark contrast to the 'humanitarianism and equality' game we are tired of playing with, but also a glaring reminder of hierarchy in humanitarian work and a coarse practice that needs revisiting. This discriminatory treatment also continued during our stay on the island, where we slept in the empty barracks while a few newly built seaside resorts and eco-friendly cottages were reserved for the UN officials, journalists and government employees.



**Refugee Housing facilities in Bhasanchar**





A newly built gigantic food storage for refugees in Bhasanchar

### REVISITING BORDER AND REFUGEEHOOD

So what makes the lives of relocated Rohingyas in this rudimentary and remote island different from the sprawling camp living in what has been called 'the world's largest refugee settlement' in Cox's Bazar, apart from its spatial isolation? A Rohingya refugee who moved there recently has a succinct description: "It's a soulless place."

When a group of Rohingya realized that my own home district is Cox's Bazar, and as we started to speak in the local dialect, another Rohingya woman shared a rather thought-provoking narrative:

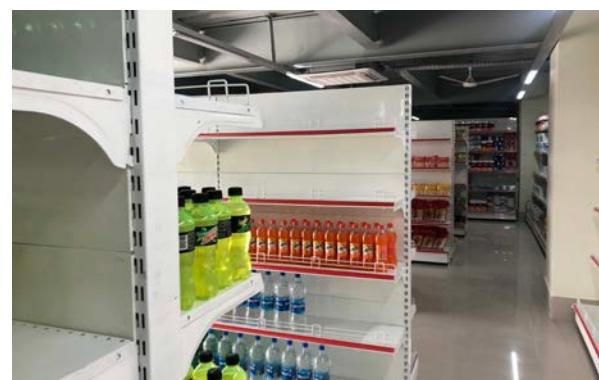
"I never felt like a foreigner in Cox's Bazar, let alone a refugee. You wake up in the morning and see the hills on the other side of the Naaf (river), that's my home. I cannot be there, but it's always there, in front of my eyes. You feel at home even though you cannot live there. We were together with the locals, same language, culture and food. Suddenly everything is different here (in Bhasanchar). Now I know what it means to be a refugee."

Another Rohingya man echoes her opinion:

"The local culture, language - even the landscape in Cox's Bazar is similar to that of Rakhine state. You are in a foreign country but not in a foreign culture. Now we have to speak a different language, need to adjust to different customs, even though we are still in Bangladesh."

These narratives tell us to revisit an important yet often overlooked question: Is a person ever simply a refugee when escaping to a different country? Refu-

geehood comes with the practice of othering, exclusion and marginalization. All these come together in Bhasanchar, where many Rohingyas suddenly encounter what it means to be a refugee.



A super shop in the island- where only the expatriates and well paid NGO workers can afford to shop



It also prompts a social imagination on the cultural matrix and modality of borders. For any passionate reader on border and identity, such dilemma that the relocated Rohingya people experience in their new 'home' in Bhasanchar (although within Bangladesh territory) may trigger questions on our understanding of border and bordering practices. Their experiences also reveal how linguistic and cultural proximity continue to challenge the artificial creation of modern nation-states and borders that we live in (and often take for granted). The testimonies of relocated Rohingyas in Bhasanchar Island, therefore, are a reminder of how the idea of borders, refugeehood and identity remains an unsettling and a recurring question in post-colonial and post-partition South Asia.

### HUMANITARIAN TOURISM

A common scenario while I explored the barracks of new refugee settlements was that of foreign humanitarian workers and their local counterparts playing football or engaging in some fun activities with the refugees as part of psychosocial support, to pull people out of their displacement trauma. A Rohingya man put it sarcastically: "They come, play, take photos and leave in a few days while we remain stuck here. We do not want to play; we want to work. Even better if we can return home (to Myanmar)." Many workers would take plenty of photos surrounded by their 'objects of care'- the half-naked Rohingya kids. These photos will then be shared on social media with friends, families and peers, which will continue to resurface online as part of activities under humanitarian operation.

Beyond the humanitarian objectives, many of the humanitarian workers' general activities on the island and the way they engage appeared as though they were in an 'exotic elsewhere'. Despite good intentions, their activities largely followed the clichés and stereotypes of exploring an island: they travel through the island with local vans and rickshaws, ride sports motorcycles, eat seafood in fancy, open-air restaurants, play the guitar in moonlit nights and sing loudly in groups at night. This apparent gap between intention and practice needs to be put into perspective.

Many local NGO workers actively work to entertain their foreign donors by facilitating such varied experiences. In doing so, they tend to ignore the fact that despite an altruistic intention to help people in distress, this humanitarian tourism lacks the sensibility needed to offer real help to displaced and distressed people.

### FINALLY, SOME EARLY REFLECTION ON DEPENDENCY

A political limbo continues to prevail in Bangladesh as the Rohingya refugee crisis and their statelessness enter a protracted phase. In this context, their abrupt and arbitrary relocation to Bhasanchar further exacerbates their plight. It also reveals a lack of political will to work on a long-term solution to this brewing refugee crisis in Southeast Asia. While the Bangladesh government considers this move imperative to decongest the overcrowded camps in Cox's Bazar, it creates a new form of immobility and exclusion. This practice of refugee 'warehousing' in tandem with their social, economic and spatial immobility in this isolated island, arguably creates a systemic dependency. It's not only about people's mobility being restricted: it also limits their ability to pursue everyday practices and to strive for self-reliance. For example, in Cox's Bazar region, a process of informal integration is slowly unfolding whereby refugees and locals were

interacting and collaborating in different capacities as neighbors, business partners, co-workers, share-croppers and even by engaging in marital relationships, despite the official restrictions. By contrast, out on Bhasanchar Island, they are simply stranded 'in the middle of nowhere,' as the saying goes. Such encampment and isolation not only hides from sight the rights and needs of this displaced population. Their removal from the social, economic and political coping systems creates a new form of asymmetrical dependency for Rohingya refugees which, in all likelihood, may further the already existing detrimental consequences that they have been living with ever since their forced exodus from Myanmar.



**Anas Ansar**

is a PhD researcher at the BCDSS and Research Associate with the Research Group "Beyond Slavery: Dependency in Asian History". His research seeks to expand the discourse of unfree labor in the context of forced migration and displacement in South-Eastern Asia. It attempts to understand how and why imposed socio-political and legal status of particular migrants and their precarious past contribute to the making of unfree labor in the country of destination. He does so by investigating the informal labor market involvement and everyday life trajectories of the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and Malaysia.



During earlier visits to the Archivo Regional de Cajamarca, I remember being stunned by the recurrent lawsuits on land ownership that crossed my sight when examining the corregimiento (administrative unit controlled by the Spanish Monarchy) and the protector de naturales (legal representative of the Indigenous population) sections. For instance, some native Andeans defended their claims on ancestral lands through kinship and royal provisions. Some others contended that the lands in dispute belonged to them and their communities and had thus been taken by fraudulent transactions. Many of them filed complaints against Spanish, mestizo, and other Indigenous hacendados for having invaded and destroyed their communal farmlands. However, what caught my attention was that, throughout the colonial period, native Andean litigants and their descendants, frequently filed extensive appeals over the same landholdings acknowledged to the other parts, thus contesting previous rulings. Since references to these litigations were deliberately mentioned in more personal records like wills or codicils, I remained curious about the extent to which land ownership (or native land dispossession for the matter) influenced social dynamics in colonial Cajamarca, as well as how much those lawsuits could reveal of pre-colonial social interactions and transcultural outcomes of colonization.

It has been assumed that, as an outcome of colonization, native Andean peoples exercised an increasing crescent individual control of farming and pasture lands, in contrast to practices of collective ownership and tenure of landholdings attributed to precolonial times. However, recent historiography challenges this dichotomy of collective-in-precolonial and individual-in-colonial land relations, proposing instead the presence of nuanced and circumstantial ways of exercising land ownership.

## ARCHIVAL FIELDWORK IN PERU

by Danitza L. Márquez Ramírez

### PERU, OCT 8, 2021 – FEB 7, 2022

The day finally arrived. Early November last year, I was about to start my long-awaited archival fieldwork in Peru. After an almost two-year pause due to the pandemic, I could finally go back to the archives and access sources for my dissertation on land ownership and asymmetrical dependencies in colonial Peru. My case study was set up in Cajamarca city, located in a north-Andean valley. It was already praised in early colonial accounts for the fertility of its lands and mild weather.

Therefore, for my dissertation, I chose to look at the making of land ownership and asymmetrical dependency relations in colonial Cajamarca. I decided to follow the traces of native Andean (and) local "elites" whose frequent appearance in lawsuits would revolve around land ownership conflicts with native Andean commons and communities.

I started with archival material documenting a ten-year lawsuit dating from the late eighteenth century, which I had randomly gathered in those earlier visits. In it, it was mentioned that descendants of an Indigenous "elite" kinship group and those of an Indigenous community had frequently been litigating several landholdings for nearly a century. The disputed landholdings were strategically located in the north-Andean valley of Cajamarca, close to the urban center of the colonial province, all indicators of a much-desired asset. Nevertheless, no land ownership acknowledgment was made at the



A normal day at the Archivo Regional de La Libertad, in Trujillo.

time. Since Indigenous "elite" litigants referred to the existence of older records such as royal provisions and wills acknowledging them ownership through kinship, I decided to follow their traces and find the core of such litigations. And so I departed for fieldwork.

My primary sources are written records composed between the sixteenth and the eighteenth century. I looked for those related to the "elite" kinship group and the community mentioned earlier. Among the notarial records were testaments and wills, codicils, goods inventories and appraisals, and purchase-sale contracts. The judicial ones included lawsuits, complaints, land compositions, and royal provisions, whereas the church records comprised baptism, marriage, and death certificates.

Access to Peruvian archives proved to be a challenge at times, not only due to Corona but also due to organizational hurdles. Regional archives had limited opening hours: three days per week, only morning slots. Research in church archives was more challenging as they rely on internal initiatives and are often extremely difficult to reach. Adding to that, not all archives have their documents catalogued or classified, which makes research much slower. On top of that not all archives allow taking pictures of the documents, which slowed down the research process considerably as I had to copy the information by hand.

My first stop was the Archivo Regional de La Libertad, located in the coastal city of Trujillo. During the late colonial period, Cajamarca belonged to the administrative district of the Intendencia de Trujillo, which is why the archive treasures several *trasladados* (legal copies) of *composiciones de tierras* (legalizations of land tenure) related to Cajamarca. Thanks to the impressive collection of catalogues and the very helpful archive staff, I gathered some relevant material.

My second stop, and the longest one, was at the Archivo Regional de Cajamarca. Located in the Complejo Monumental Belén, at the heart of Cajamarca city, this

fascinating historical building was home to the men's hospital in the colonial period and to the baroque-style Belén Church, which still stands. Nowadays, apart from hosting the archive, it is home to other cultural and touristic institutions. The Archivo Regional de Cajamarca holds a wide range of index cards of testaments and some codicils, and a detailed catalogue of the corregimiento section. Unfortunately, the other sections remain uncatalogued, which meant that I had to turn page by page, folder by folder, looking for any valuable information. To my relief, taking pictures was allowed. At some point, all the staff became infected with Corona, which led to closure of the archive for several days and my fear of having to make last-minute adjustments to my research schedule. Despite all that, I was able to collect essential archival material during this stay.

My time at the Archivo General de la Nación in Lima was brief but successful. What I found there is key to continue developing my research topic. However, since I was only allowed to consult five documents per day, I ran out of time to consult any documents held at the Archivo San Francisco de Lima. (The Franciscans were in charge of the evangelization of Cajamarca's native Andean population.)



The sometimes challenging sixteenth-century handwriting at the Archivo General de la Nación in Lima.

Altogether, I gathered a lot of important material during my four months in Peru, which will certainly keep me going with my research. Unfortunately, I was unable to carry out any research in church archives. Accessing material was definitely a challenge, and so were the early-colonial handwritings!



**Danitza L. Márquez Ramírez**

is a PhD researcher at the BCDSS, a Research Associate in Research Area C "Institutions, Norms and Practices" and Research Area E "Gender and Intersectionality." She is interested in land relations and resource dependencies in Spanish America, especially in the north Peruvian Andes. Her doctoral thesis considers that local elites circumstantially used their Indigenous ascriptions to contend land ownership against Indigenous communities and that land dispossession significantly influenced the social dynamics within the colonial space.



## EXPLORING MUSEUMS AND ANCIENT LANDS

by Tamia Viteri Toledo

Pottery drawings at MACCO museum.

### FIELDWORK ON THE NAPO RIVER BANKS, ECUADOR

NOV 4, 2021 – JAN 07, 2022

Ever since I became interested in Amazonian archaeology in Ecuador I wondered why there has been so little research in this region: there is a great asymmetry between the selection of archaeological areas "with high potential" on the coast and the Andes, and those with "low potential" in the Amazon. However, I was soon to discover some explanations. Up to now, the past of the northern Amazon has mostly been glimpsed through chroniclers, expeditionary adventurers and by the fascination of some missionaries of the Capuchin order for the fine pottery found by indigenous peoples. The missionaries preserved these remains carefully in a small museum in Orellana province in the north-east of Ecuador.

As recently as 2015, the local government opened an imposing museum in Coca city, the "Archaeological Museum and Cultural Center of Orellana" (MACCO). I attended its inauguration, and this was what captivated my attention for the material past of the Amazon region. What fascinated me most were the remains of the Napo culture, which existed between 1168 and 1480 CE. It had a complex network of cultural interactions that stretched throughout the Amazon basin to the Atlantic coasts what is currently Brazil. However, there are many challenges to the study of a culture whose material evidence mostly does not have any archaeological contexts, but, judging by the iconic and stylistic complexity of the ceramic production, deserve a detailed examination by the archaeological discipline. From this starting point, in my field research I want to

conduct a ceramic and iconographic analysis of Napo funerary urns, to examine how material evidence of funerary practices can show us how certain asymmetrical dependencies were embodied in Napo society and in its broader context of the Amazonian Polychrome Tradition. To this end, I planned my field trip to work with different Ecuadorian museum collections of Napo urns. The second purpose of this visit is to establish first contacts with indigenous communities where Napo culture artifacts were found, in order to develop future archaeological research to help us contextualize the material culture of this region.



Pottery analysis with a portable microscope.

This is how my journey to Ecuador began and where I was working for three months. I was very excited and really looked forward to working again with material objects. I was homesick for the open spaces and the living culture, after having spent so much time doing office work. The first stop was the MACCO museum. Here I mainly documented all the formal and techno-

logical characteristics of funerary urns, such as ceramic drawings, analysis of ceramic pastes, manufacturing techniques, decoration, etc. One of the most interesting parts in these analyses was to observe the marks left by the artisans in the manufacture of these pieces. Not just their fingerprints, but also certain traces that show the decisions that potters are making about production processes. Such traces make it possible for us to reflect about the thought processes that might have taken place in their minds to materialize in different ways certain characteristics in the urns.

Through these hands-on encounters with the funerary urns I manage to forge a sort of indirect relationship with the potters of the past, and with the materiality itself. Slowly, a familiarity develops between us as we share long working days, blurring the division between object and a corp embodied of subjectivities. Considering that these pieces were carefully outfitted, decorated and given a specific personality makes me wonder whether the urns might have been treated as living bodies in the past, especially in those cases where the artist took particular care to embody a character in the object. An urn may have been treated as a living thing especially when it contained the remains of the deceased.



**Documentation of osteological remains.**

During this work, I also documented some skeletal remains in funerary urns and arranged for their transfer from Orellana to Quito to be analyzed by a bioanthropologist. During this process the unexpected happened. While separating some bones mixed with soil, I began to notice very small beads of different colors. The most striking ones were the orange beads. They were made of Spondylus shell, also known as spiny or thorny oysters, from the Pacific coast of the Americas. This discovery could add a new way of exploring dependencies in terms of particular resources, which in the case of Andean archaeology have been considered as luxury or exclusive goods available only to a limited number of people.

My time in the museum was coming to an end fast and soon I would be starting my journey down the Napo River. It was a moment I was looking forward to, but I also had many concerns about how my project would be received by the indigenous communities I was planning to visit. I began my journey at dawn from the main port of Coca city, covering 166 km in two weeks along the Napo River, and visiting eleven communities. While

I was planning the logistics for this journey, I began to understand the great challenges of conducting archaeological research in the region.



**Navigating on the Napo river.**

On the one hand, the location of communities with evidence of Napo culture settlements is accessible only by river, and river transport is extremely expensive, both for the transfer of people and for all the equipment necessary to carry out archaeological investigations. On the other hand, in most of the indigenous communities there is no housing, unless some family provides a place to stay overnight. The same applies to food. These were my first visits to these communities, so in some cases it was difficult to establish enough confidence for families to offer accommodation to strangers. On one occasion we had to camp on the banks of the Napo. These limitations often made it necessary for us to stay in nearby villages and travel daily to the indigenous communities.



**Exploring the banks of Napo river in Sinchi Shicta community.**

There are other aspects. Orellana is a highly polarized region. It has great natural wealth and is home to one of the most biodiverse natural parks in the world, Yasuní National Park. It also has large oil reserves, which make Orellana an oil province par excellence. However, although oil is the main source of income of the Ecuadorian economy, Orellana is one of the poorest provinces in the country. While the oil camps are sort of closed-off small towns built exclusively for the welfare of oil workers where all comforts are available, on the opposite bank of the river there is a great devastation, soil and water pollution and extreme poverty among indigenous populations. This has caused great socio-economic

conflicts, evidenced by the great skepticism of indigenous people towards visits from outsiders and even more so when it comes to research projects, since they have often been swindled in the past.



Meeting with a local family in Puerto El Quinche community.

The connection to the project of one of the leaders of the Kichwa Amazonian organizations in Orellana and his great interest in my research topic was enormously helpful in establishing initial relationships with Kichwa communities along the Napo River and to gain their acceptance for developing future research. Even so, during the journey the roles between different team members soon became blurred. It was very difficult for the chief, who spent a long career leading social processes for the recognition of indigenous rights and their territories, that a young, small woman, was leading an investigation. Consequently, there were moments in which tensions came to the fore about who should decide the course of the fieldwork. These experiences made me consider the need to reflect in my dissertation on the emergence of asymmetrical relationships that can occur during processes of socialization and interaction with indigenous leaders and inhabitants of communities.



Local finding of a ceramic burial cover in Limoncocha community.

But these situations only occurred sometimes and, there were also very interesting moments of exchange when we could contribute from our respective knowledge. We listened to each other with interest and curiously about our very different experiences. Moreover, we shared the most joyful moments. They were those

when we had close encounters with the materiality of the past, such as when we found the sites that were once inhabited by the Napo culture. It was amazing to encounter the ancient artefacts, especially those polychrome ceramics, so beautifully decorated and in some cases surviving intact despite the years and the acidic Amazonian soils. It was in these moments that we found we shared the same concerns and questions about the ancient people. Who were they? Why did they decorate their pottery in this way? What meanings did these decorations have for those who created them? What happened to these populations when the Spanish arrived? Who were their descendants? And if there are descendants, how close are they to the families that currently inhabit the Napo riversides?



Visiting the collection of funerary urns of the MACCO museum.

All too soon it was time for my return to Quito to work with the last collections of funerary urns. And then I would have to leave for Bonn, taking with me the longing to visit these lands again.



**Tamia Viteri Toledo**

is a PhD researcher at the BCDSS and part of Research Area B "Embodied Dependencies". She is interested in Amazonian archaeology with a special focus on how social

structure, identity and human and non-human relations are embodied on materiality and artistic expressions through the study of iconography. Her dissertation project seeks to understand how asymmetrical dependencies based on the acquisition and the legitimization of status and power relations are expressed in ancient funerary urns of the Upper Amazon.



Ottoman Pipes from Tophane, Levantine and Cypriot

## FIELD RESEARCH AT THE CYPRUS INSTITUTE, NICOSIA

by Nolwenn Guedeaup

CYPRUS, FEB – APRIL 2022

### HOW DID THE ANCESTORS OF THE CYPRIOTS SMOKE?

I became interested in Ottoman pipes in 2017. I was then in Iraq for an archaeological excavation in Kurdistan, and I saw that these objects were not understood by my colleagues, that they had no interest in them (too recent, too trivial), even if they were found in very large quantities. I even saw some colleagues throwing them away without documenting them! I was very shocked to see how archaeologists, Europeans, took the liberty of choosing what was important to preserve or not. I took this subject very much to heart, thinking that by studying them, it would bring them to light and give them the importance and respect they deserve. I did a Master's degree on the subject, and I am currently doing a PhD. I had the opportunity to work on Cypriot pipes thanks to my French supervisor, Prof. Véronique François, who has worked a lot on the island. I had also applied for a fellowship at the Cyprus Institute for a six-month period to carry out petrographic studies. My application was successful. At the same time, I was offered a position at the University of Bonn, at the BCDSS, which I accepted. I couldn't do both at the same time, so I turned down the one at the Cyprus Institute. Maria Dikomitou Eliadou, who had recruited me in Cyprus, was very sad that she could not continue this project with me. She invited me to come to Cyprus anyway, to carry out analyses on my objects. So I was hosted at CAARI, the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute, during the month of March 2022.

### THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY AND CONSUMPTION: A NEW PRODUCTION AND HABIT CHANGING PEOPLE'S SOCIAL LIVES

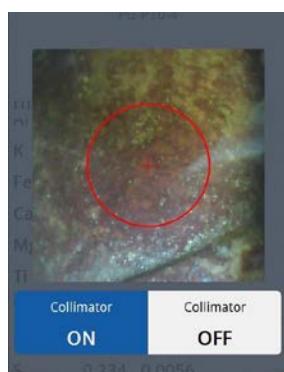
Tobacco cultivation began in South America in the 5th millennium BC. A member of the solanaceae family, the most widely consumed species is *nicotinia rustica* and *nicotania tabacum*, which was named in the second half of the 16th century by the French ambassador to Portugal Jean Nicot (Barbier, 1861, p. 14). The introduction of tobacco into the Ottoman Empire probably took place in the late 16th or early 17th century by English or Portuguese merchants in Turkish, Egyptian and Levantine ports (Simpson, 2011, p. 61, De Vincenz, 2016, p. 118). Initially used for medical reasons, tobacco was used by a wealthy elite in the cities. From the first half of the 17th century it started spreading to the whole of Ottoman society, whether urban, rural, rich, poor, men

or women. However, tobacco was also quickly banned by the Ottoman authorities, starting with Sultan Ahmet I (1590-1617) for moral and religious reasons, and in 1633, Murad IV imposed the death penalty for smoking, after fires had destroyed one fifth of Istanbul (Süngü, 2014, p. 8). However, in 1646, Sultan Ibrahim officially authorised the consumption and production of tobacco due to the great possibility of taxation.

The tobacco industry is very lucrative for the state. It is a strong organization that integrates many actors. My research focuses on two types of actors in the tobacco industry, those producing tobacco itself, and those producing the objects linked to the consumption: pipes. My stay in Cyprus was to better understand the material culture of this industry and thus understand the autonomy of the pipe producers in the face of the Ottoman imperialist economy.

#### HOW I WENT ABOUT

The sites that I studied are the Archbishop's Palace, Pafos Gate, Eleutherias Square and two small salvage excavations, all located in Nicosia. The pipes come from unclear stratigraphic contexts, as is often the case for Ottoman sites. The methodology for recording the pipes was carried out in several parts. The first phase was the photographing and drawing of the objects, more than 300 pieces. The description and writing of the catalogue was done following the Chaîne Opératoire theory. The following elements were analysed: the breakage, the shape and decoration of the shank end, the shape and decoration of the bowl, then of the stem, the angle of the bowl and the stem, the presence of stamps, the traces of combustion and the defects before firing, the color of the clay and its texture, the presence of inclusions, the slip and the surface treatment, as well as the size of the object. Maria Dikomitou Eliadou, my collaborator from the Cyprus Institute, STARC, and I also carried out pXRF analysis on the Paphos Gate pipes. This analysis consists of sending radioactive waves onto the surface of the object, which gives us the chemical composition of the object. This is the first time that this type of analysis was performed on pipes. However, we didn't know



Clay surface seen on pXRF device

whether the results would be satisfactory, as the whole process was experimental. The purpose of this analysis was to better understand the production techniques and to define the types more precisely. I took tobacco samples from the pipes in Eleutherias Square, in order to find out what type of tobacco was consumed, and I am excited to see these analyses car-

ried out in Germany, at the Max Planck Institute in Jena. I have applied to the local authorities to export these objects. I am particularly involved in this project, as Traci Billing, my collaborator in Jena, will train me in these scientific techniques. She herself works on tobacco residues from North American pipes and was very interested to try her method on other types of objects.

#### WHAT I FOUND OUT

There are 390 pipes from these five sites. Initially it was possible to highlight a large proportion of imported pipes, coming from two major centres: Istanbul and the workshops of Tophane as well as the Levant. In the end I was able to highlight the presence of twelve different types. The fact that there are so many different types is quite remarkable, which proves a great heterogeneity of consumption. And in particular a big influence of Istanbul in the consumption. Other regions that I studied, like Iraqi Kurdistan or Al-Ula in Saudi Arabia for example, only had four different types, so we can see that the economic interaction was quite developed in Cyprus. It is very interesting to be able to diversify the methods adapted to archaeology in order to better understand the history and the different interactions in the Ottoman Empire. It would be very interesting to be able to do this kind of analysis on other collections and thus highlight the information obtained on these objects. This collaboration will hopefully provide the latest results of pXRF and chemical analyses by the end of the year.

This research allowed me to make very good contacts in the country (including some Post-doc offers). I also learnt new techniques to study ceramics, which gave me a new perspective on my study and many ideas for future projects.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This mission was possible thanks to funding from the BCDSS. I would also like to thank the Department of Antiquity of Cyprus and Fryni Hadjichristofi, Efthymia Alphas and Chrysanthi Kounnou for allowing me to work on their material, and special thanks to Polina Christofi who, in addition to allowing me to study her material macroscopically, let me carry out pXRF and SEM studies. Finally, I thank the Cyprus Institute and Maria Dikomitou Eliadou and Jelena Zivkovic for their collaboration.



**Nolwenn Guedreau**

is a PhD researcher at the BCDSS and a Research Associate in Research Area B "Embodied Dependencies". She works on the industry and consumption of tobacco in the Ottoman Empire during the 17th and 19th Century with an archaeological and historical

point of view. The aim of her research is to understand the role of the different actors of the industry and see how this new resource has induced asymmetrical dependency between the local communities and the Ottoman imperialist economy.



**2022 Academy of Korean Studies (AKS) Fellowship Program for Korean Studies Fellows from Meiji University (Japan), University of Oxford (UK), University of Sussex (UK), and University of Bonn (Germany) with AKS President Dr. Ahn Byung Woo (fourth from left), AKS Director for International Affairs Dr. Cho Yoonghee (fifth from left), AKS Head of the International Support for Korean Studies Dr. Park Sungho (first from left), and AKS Fellowship Coordinator Ms. Kang Yungmee (first from right).**

## ARCHIVAL RESEARCH IN SOUTH KOREA

By Christine Mae Sarito

### SOUTH KOREA, SPRING 2022

My research project, "Situating a Kisaeng's (a professional female entertainer) Space: Gendered Dependency in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Chosŏn Korea" requires me to go to South Korea for an archival trip. Along with the funding provided by BCDSS, I am privileged to be one of the grantees of the 2022 AKS Fellowship Program for Korean Studies Fellowship of The Academy of Korean Studies (韓國學中央研究院; 한국학중앙연구원; *Hankukhak chungang yönguwon*) a graduate and research institution in Seongnam-si, Gyeonggi-do, South Korea. The AKS Fellowship Program for Korean Studies includes my airfare, a monthly stipend, a fifty percent discount at the AKS guesthouse, and access to the AKS library and facilities. The AKS is also my host institution as I conduct my three-month archival research in South Korea.

At the time of writing this article, I am in the first half of my stay here in South Korea. I visited various archives such as Kyujanggak and Jangseogak. Kyujanggak (奎章閣; 규장각) was originally the royal archive of the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1910), founded in 1776 upon the orders of King Jeongjo, the twenty-second monarch of the dynasty. Originally located at Changdeok Palace, one of the Chosŏn Dynasty's "Five Grand Palaces", the royal archive Kyujanggak is now housed by the Seoul National University (SNU) in its Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies. Kyujanggak has more than 200,000

objects in its collections, which include the Veritable Records of the Chosōn Dynasty (朝鮮王朝實錄; 조선왕조실록; *Chosōn Wangjo Sillok*), Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat (承政院 日記; 승정원 일기; *Sǔngjōngwǒn ilgi*), and Royal Protocols of the Chosōn Dynasty (儀軌; 의궤; *Uigwe*), which are among the national treasures of South Korea. Jangseogak (藏書閣; 장서각) archive, which literally means "a place that keeps treasured books" is another archival institution that houses around 120.000 Chosōn dynastic records and 60.000 private documents collected from all over South Korea. The Academy of Korean Studies, which manages Jangseogak since 1981, endeavours in the scientific preservation of these documents and make it more accessible to scholars of Korean Studies.



**Amorous Youths on a Spring Outing.**  
Cultural Heritage Images | National Treasure No. 135. "Album of Genre Paintings by Sin Yun-bok"

I also visited Yonghwasa, a Buddhist temple located at Yeongcheon-si, Gyeongsangbuk-do, a province in the southeast of South Korea. Yonghwasa houses archival sources on the kisaeng of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the professional female entertainers who are the subject of my research. My trip to South Korea is not just about visiting the archives, but also meeting with South Korean academics. In Yonghwasa, I met with Director Heon-jin Jeon, also known as Monk Jibong, head of the Yeongcheon Museum of History, who discussed the role of Yeongcheon in kisaeng history with me. Yeongcheon is one place in South Korea where a Chosōn dynasty *kyobang* or *kisaeng* school, was located. It was in *kyobang* where *kisaeng* trainees were taught and trained in calligraphy and the performing arts by older *kisaeng*. I also visited the

Asian Center for Women's Studies of Ewha Women's University in Seoul and met with its Director, Prof. Jiyoung Jung, whose research focuses on marginalized Korean women, such as the *kisaeng* in late Chosōn and colonial Korea.



**Dance with Two Swords.**  
Cultural Heritage Images | National Treasure No. 135. "Album of Genre Paintings by Sin Yun-bok"

The term *kisaeng* or *gisaeng* (ko:기생; lzh: 妓生; lit. "skilled woman"), refers to women of *chōnmin* 천민 賤民 (lit. "base people") caste during Korea's Chosōn Dynasty<sup>1</sup> 대조선국 大朝鮮國 (lit. "Great Chosōn State"). The *kisaeng* were recruited as young as the age of nine and trained in painting, poetry, calligraphy, music, and conversation in order to provide artistic entertainment to the royals, foreign dignitaries, and *yangban*<sup>2</sup> 양반 兩班 (aristocratic) men when they reach the age of fifteen. Some of the *kisaeng* also performed in royal court rituals as members of the *Changagwǒn* 장악원 掌樂院 (lit. "Royal Music Bureau").<sup>3</sup> *Kisaeng*'s role in court entertainment "spanned a wide range in terms of scale and formality, from huge public celebrations on major holidays, state banquets for foreign dignitaries and parties given by the king honoring his officials, to intimate gatherings in the royal family's private quarters".<sup>4</sup>

*Kisaeng* were also known by several names: *ki* 妓, *kinyō* 기녀 妓女, *yōak* 여악 女樂, *yōgi* 여妓, *yōgi* 여기 女伎, *yōryōng* 여령 女伶, *yōgongin* 여공인 女工人, *ch'angnyō* 창녀 媚女, *ch'angnyō* 창녀 倡女, *ch'anggi* 창기 媚妓, *ch'anggi* 창기 媚伎, *ch'anggi* 창기 倡妓, *kwan'gi* 관기 官妓, and *kwambi* 관비 官婢.<sup>5</sup> Some of the mentioned alternative names of the *kisaeng* were skills-specific, for example, *yōak*, which literally meant "female

<sup>1</sup> Chosōn Dynasty is also known as Lee or Yi Dynasty. It lasted for over five hundred years, from its founding by Yi Sōnggye (King T'aejo r. 1392-1398) in 1392 who led the overthrow of the Koryō Dynasty. Chosōn Dynasty was replaced in 1897 by the Korean Empire (1897-1910) 대한제국 大韓帝國 (*Daehan jeguk*; lit. "Great Korean Empire"), still headed by Lee's descendants, until Korea was annexed by Japan in 1910.

<sup>2</sup> *Yangban* were the noble caste in Chosōn Korea composed of civil and military officials.

<sup>3</sup> Bang-song Song, "Changagwǒn 장악원 掌樂院," in *Encyclopedia of Korean Culture* (Seongnam-si: The Academy of Korean Studies, 1995), <http://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/Item/E0048643>.

<sup>4</sup> Hyun Suk Park, "The Government Courtesan: Status, Gender, and Performance in Late Chosōn Korea" (Ph.D., United States – Illinois, The University of Chicago, 2015), 53.

<sup>5</sup> Suh, "Vernacular Music and Female Musicians in Late Chosōn Korea, 1700-1897," 161-62.

musician." As my dissertation does not focus only in the *kisaeng*'s music but also their painting, poetry, calligraphy, and conversation, I use the term *kisaeng* (lit. skilled woman), as it encompasses the variety of skills and talents of this group of women, emphasizing that they did not excel in just one particular artistic labor.



Portrait of a Beauty by Sin Yun-bok

I am thankful to the South Korean scholars I met so far who shared with me their valuable insights on my research. My archival trip made me also admire even more the archival tradition of South Korea. The digitization of archival materials not only makes it much easier for researchers to access these primary sources, it also protects the original materials from any further damage. Nevertheless, there are several Chosön records which are scattered, such as those documents concerning *kisaeng*, as evidenced by the seventeenth-century manuscript in Yeongcheon. The current state of the manuscript (refer to photo) requires urgent attention of archivists. Unless it is scientifically preserved, the story the manuscript wants to tell us about the *kisaeng* will perish with it.



Boating on a River.  
Cultural Heritage Images | National Treasure No. 135. "Album of Genre Paintings by Sin Yun-bok"



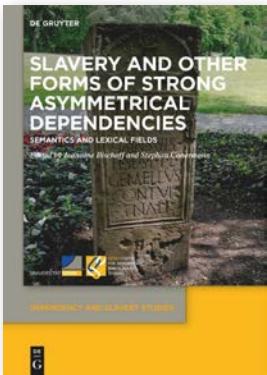
**Christine Mae Sarito**

is a PhD researcher at the BCDSS and Research Associate in Research Group "Coerced Circulation of Knowledge". She is interested in gendered dependency in premodern Korea, especially in the 16th and 17th centuries. Her dissertation explores how the *kisaeng*, professional female entertainers, were able to navigate and carve out their space in a patriarchal and Neo-Confucian society.

# NEW PUBLICATIONS

## SLAVERY AND OTHER FORMS OF STRONG ASYMMETRICAL DEPENDENCIES: SEMANTICS AND LEXICAL FIELDS

Volume 1 in the BCDSS series "Dependency and Slavery Studies" (DSS)  
by Jeannine Bischoff and Stephan Conermann



Jeannine Bischoff and Stephan Conermann, *Slavery and Other Forms of Strong Asymmetrical Dependencies: Semantics and Lexical Fields*  
ISBN: 9783110786989  
Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2022

The phenomenon of slavery and other types of strong asymmetrical dependencies is approached from two methodologically and theoretically distinct perspectives: semantics and lexical fields.

Detailed analyses of key terms that are associated with the conceptualization of strong asymmetrical dependencies provide new insights into the self-concept and knowledge of pre-modern societies. The majority of these key terms have not been studied from a semantic or terminological perspective so far.

The understanding of lexical fields is based on an onomasiological approach – which linguistic items are used to refer to a concept? Which words are used to express a concept? This means that the concept is a semantic unit which is not directly accessible but may be manifested in different ways on the linguistic level. The authors are interested in single concepts such as 'wisdom' or 'fear', but also in more complex semantic units like 'strong asymmetrical dependencies'.

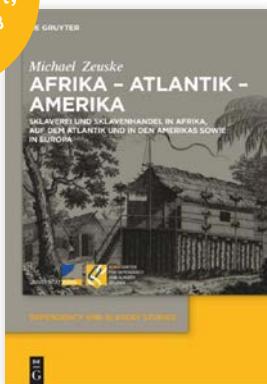
The volume offers case studies from very different social orders and normative perspectives, ranging from Ancient China and Egypt over Greek and Maya societies to Early Modern Russia, the Ottoman Empire and Islamic and Roman law.



Download via open access:

## AFRICA – ATLANTIC – AMERICA. SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE TRADE IN AFRICA, THE ATLANTIC, THE AMERICAS, AND EUROPE

Save the date:  
Book Launch  
planned in early  
March 2023



Zeuske, Michael  
Afrika – Atlantik – Amerika:  
Sklaverei und Sklavenhandel in  
Afrika, auf dem Atlantik und in  
den Amerikas sowie in Europa  
ISBN: 9783110787160  
Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter 2022

Volume 2 in the BCDSS series  
“Dependency and Slavery Studies” (DSS)  
by Michael Zeuske

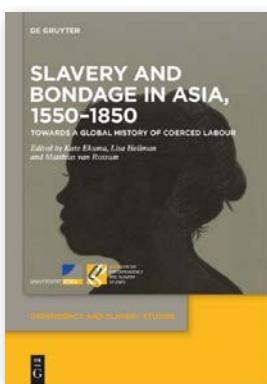
This book centers on the Africa-Atlantic-Americas system and its relationship to the complex of Atlantic slavery, regimes of slavery on land in Africa and America, enslavement and transport over land and water, and the slave trade in the Atlantic. The volume pays special attention to the South-South component as an essential factor in slavery and on the significance of the AAA system in the history of modernity and capitalism. Atlantic slavery or Atlantic slaveries are understood to be twofold: (1) the slavery regimes on African and American land, including the islands; (2) the enslavement and transportation by land and sea, to which the slave trade on the Atlantic (middle passage) belongs.



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## SLAVERY AND BONDAGE IN ASIA, 1550–1850: TOWARDS A GLOBAL HISTORY OF COERCED LABOUR

Volume 3 in the BCDSS series “Dependency and Slavery Studies” (DSS)  
by Kate Ekama, Lisa Hellman and Matthias van Rossum



Ekama, Kate, Hellman, Lisa and  
Rossum, Matthias van  
Slavery and Bondage in Asia,  
1550–1850: Towards a Global  
History of Coerced Labour  
ISBN: 9783110777246  
Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2022

The study of slavery and coerced labour is increasingly conducted from a global perspective, and yet a dual Eurocentric bias remains: slavery primarily brings to mind the images of Atlantic chattel slavery, and most studies continue to be based – either outright or implicitly – on a model of northern European wage labour. This book constitutes an attempt to re-centre that story to Asia.

With studies spanning the western Indian Ocean and the steppes of Central Asia to the islands of South East Asia and Japan, and ranging from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, this book tracks coercion in diverse forms, tracing both similarities and differences – as well as connections – between systems of coercion, from early sales regulations to post-abolition labour contracts.

Deep empirical case studies, as well as comparisons between the chapters, all show that while coercion was entrenched in a number of societies, it was so in different and shifting ways. This book thus not only shows the history of slavery and coercion in Asia as a connected story, but also lays the groundwork for global studies of a phenomenon as varying, manifold and contested as coercion.

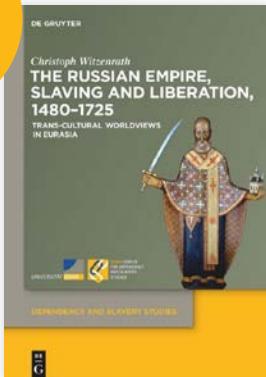


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## THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE, SLAVING AND LIBERATION, 1480–1725: TRANS-CULTURAL WORLDVIEWS IN EURASIA

Volume 4 in the BCDSS series "Dependency and Slavery Studies" (DSS)  
by Christoph Witzenrath

Save the date:  
Book Launch  
planned in early  
March 2023



The monograph realigns political culture and countermeasures against slave raids, which increased during the breakup of the Golden Horde. By physical defense of the open steppe border and by embracing the New Israel symbolism in which the exodus from slavery in Egypt prefigures the exodus of Russian captives from Tatar captivity, Muscovites found a defensive model to expand empire. Recent scholarly debates on slaving are innovatively applied to Russian and imperial history, challenging entrenched perceptions of Muscovy.

Witzenrath, Christoph  
The Russian Empire, Slaving  
and Liberation, 1480–1725:  
Trans-Cultural Worldviews in  
Eurasia  
ISBN: 9783110696417  
Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter 2022



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## REDEFINING 'LEGITIMATE' DEPENDENCIES IN A PANJABI RIYĀSAT: LOCAL AND COLONIAL PERSPECTIVES

Volume 13 in the Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture Series  
Girija Joshi



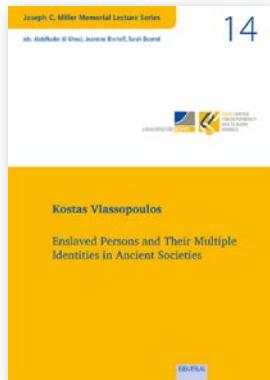
Girija Joshi  
eds. Abdelkader Al Ghous, Jeannine  
Bischoff, Sarah Dusend  
Redefining 'Legitimate' Dependencies  
in a Panjabi Riyāsat: Local and  
Colonial Perspectives  
ISBN: 978-3-86893-429-8  
EBVERLAG 2022

This essay traces the changing contours of a Panjabi state during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It focuses on the Kalsia principality, founded by a family of rural warlords who had transformed themselves from village elders to the rulers of a distinct principality within a generation. Using a chronicle left by a retainer and scribe of the Kalsia administration, it studies a handful of the chiefly lineage's dependents (tābe īn), to try to understand what their position within the ruling household was, what rendered them dependent, and what kept them loyal. It argues that jural status was of some, but not determinant, importance in creating deeply hierarchical bonds; just as important was the value that patron and client, master and slave alike attached to such unequal relations, as a source of honour, status, and influence. This value was moreover shared across and attached to a range of relationships, from kinship bonds to servitude, blurring the distinction between family and service. This began to change, at least in law, in the wake of colonization, as the British sought to impose fixed boundaries on the household, to progressively strip ruling houses of their land.



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## ENSLAVED PERSONS AND THEIR MULTIPLE IDENTITIES IN ANCIENT SOCIETIES



Volume 14 in the Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture Series  
Kostas Vlassopoulos

Kostas Vlassopoulos  
eds. Abdelkader Al Ghousi,  
Jeannine Bischoff, Sarah Dusend  
Enslaved Persons and Their  
Multiple Identities in Ancient  
Societies  
ISBN: 978-3-86893-430-4  
EBVERLAG 2022

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## BCDSS WORKING PAPERS

The BCDSS published eight Working Papers between March and August 2022. The aim of this publishing series is to present results from ongoing research and stimulate debates on the Cluster's new key concept of *strong asymmetrical dependency*. The papers are conceptualized as "work in progress". Edited by Abdelkader Al Ghousi/Janico Albrecht, Jeannine Bischoff, and Stephan Conermann, they are subject to an internal peer review. All working papers can be downloaded from the BCDSS website.



ISSN: 2747-9331





## BCDSS DISCUSSION PAPERS

The "Discussion Papers" are dedicated to discussing the theoretical side of "strong asymmetrical dependency". They serve as impulses for researchers in and beyond the BCDSS who intend to work with this new key concept.



### ON DEPENDENCE, DEPENDENCY, AND A DEPENDENCY TURN. AN ESSAY WITH SYSTEMATIC INTENT

#### BCDSS Discussion Paper by Christoph Antweiler

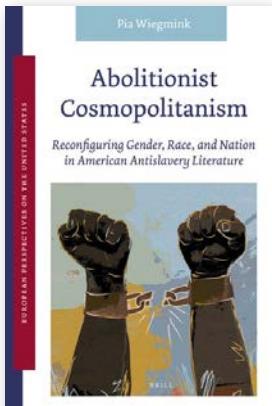
Which phenomena are to be considered as forms of asymmetrical dependence and dependency among human beings? How can we distinguish between dependence and dependency? Do we need a "dependency turn" in cultural studies, social science and historical research? These are the key questions addressed in this paper. It is an explicitly conceptual paper that aims at a clarification of analytic issues of dependence and dependency in a systematic manner.



Papers are free for download as PDF files.

## ABOLITIONIST COSMOPOLITANISM: RECONFIGURING GENDER, RACE, AND NATION IN AMERICAN ANTISLAVERY LITERATURE

New book by Pia Wiegmink



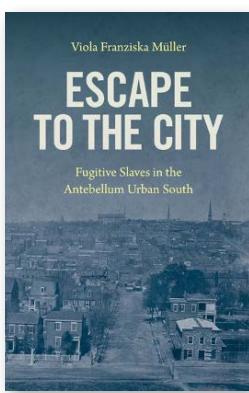
Abolitionist Cosmopolitanism redefines the potential of American antislavery literature as a cultural and political imaginary by situating antislavery literature in specific transnational contexts and highlighting the role of women as producers, subjects, and audiences of antislavery literature. Prof. Dr. Pia Wiegmink draws attention to locales, authors, and webs of entanglement between texts, ideas, and people. Perceived through the lens of gender and transnationalism, American antislavery literature emerges as a body of writing that presents profoundly reconfigured literary imaginations of freedom and equality in the United States prior to the Civil War.

Wiegmink, Pia.  
Abolitionist Cosmopolitanism:  
Reconfiguring Gender, Race, and  
Nation in American Antislavery  
Literature, Leiden, Brill Sept. 2022.



## ESCAPE TO THE CITY: FUGITIVE SLAVES IN THE ANTEBELLUM URBAN SOUTH

New book by Viola Franziska Müller



In the urban South, they found shelter, work, and other survival networks that enabled them to live in slaveholding territory, shielded and supported by their host communities in an act of collective resistance to slavery. While all fugitives risked their lives to escape slavery, those who fled to southern cities were perhaps the most vulnerable of all. Not dissimilar to modern-day refugees and illegal migrants, runaway slaves that sought refuge in the urban South were antebellum America's undocumented people, forging lives free from bondage but without the legal status of freed people. Spanning from the 1810s to the start of the Civil War, Dr. Viola Franziska Müller's Escape to the City reveals how urbanization, work opportunities, and the interconnectedness of free and enslaved Black people in each city determined how successfully runaways could remain invisible to authorities.

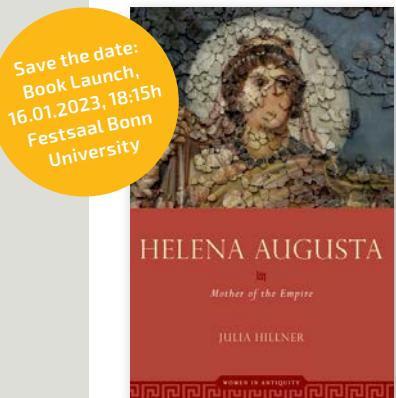
Müller, Viola Franziska.  
Escape to the City: Fugitive  
Slaves in the Antebellum Urban  
South, The University of North  
Carolina Press Sept. 2022.



## HELENA AUGUSTA, MOTHER OF THE EMPIRE



New book by Julia Hillner



Save the date:  
Book Launch,  
16.01.2023, 18:15h  
Festsaal Bonn  
University

Hillner, Julia.

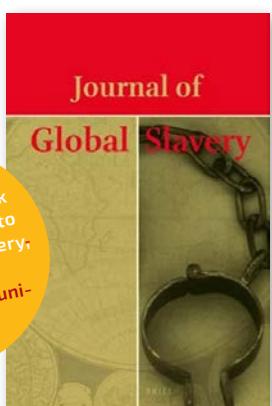
Helena Augusta, Mother of the Empire, Women in Antiquity, Oxford University Press December 2022

Julia Hillner traces Helena's story through her life's peaks, which generated beautiful imperial artwork, entertaining legends as well as literary outrage. But Helena Augusta also pays careful attention to the disruptions in Helena's life course and in her commemoration—disruptions that were created by her nearest male relatives. Hillner shows that Helena's story was not just determined by the love of a son or the rise of Christianity. It was also—like that of many other late Roman women—defined by male violence and by the web of changing female relationships around her, to which Helena was sometimes marginal, sometimes central and sometimes ancillary. Helena Augusta offers unique insight into the roles of imperial women in Constantian self-display and in dynastic politics from the Tetrarchy to the Theodosian Age, and it also reminds us that the late Roman female life course, even that of an empress, was fragile and non-linear.



## PUNISHING THE ENSLAVED: SLAVERY, LABOR, AND PUNITIVE PRACTICES IN THE AMERICAS, 1760s-1880

Special Issue, Christian G. De Vito and Viola F. Müller (eds.)



For ideas on book reviews related to review Global Slavery, contact: viola.mueller@uni-bonn.de

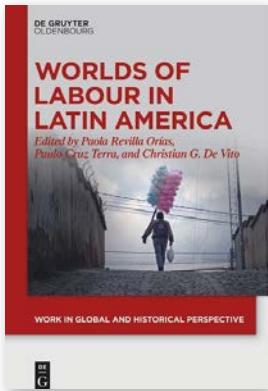
This special issue explores how enslaved workers of African descent were punished in the Americas. It studies punishment inside and beyond the criminal justice system, investigating its legitimization and implementation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Collectively, the articles address three main themes: the relationship between the enslaved, the slaveholders, and the state; the shifts in modalities of governance across space and time; and the entanglement of modes of punishment across geographies. This perspective illustrates the broader implications of punishment for issues of labor supply and labor control, and helps us understand how slavery was produced and reproduced in different, yet connected, regions of the Americas.

Christian G. De Vito and Viola F. Müller (eds.). *Punishing the Enslaved: Slavery, Labor, and Punitive Practices in the Americas, 1760s-1880s*, Journal of Global Slavery, Special Issue: Vol. 7/ 1-2 (March 2022), Brill.



## WORLDS OF LABOUR IN LATIN AMERICA

Paola Revilla Orías, Paulo Cruz Terra and Christian G. De Vito (eds.)



Worlds of Labour in Latin America, edited by Paola Revilla Orías, Paulo Cruz Terra and Christian G. De Vito, Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2022.

This book reflects the development of Latin American labour history across broad geographical, chronological and thematic perspectives, which seek to review and revisit key concepts at different levels. The contributions are closely linked to the most recent trends in Global Labour History and in turn, they enrich those trends.

Here, authors from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, Peru and Spain take a historical and sociological perspective and analyse a series of problems relating to labour relations. The chapters weave together different periods of Latin American colonial and republican history from the vice-royalties of New Spain (now Mexico) and Peru, the Royal Audiencia de Charcas (now Bolivia), Argentina and Uruguay (former vice-royalty of Río de La Plata) and Chile (former Capitanía General).



### CURRENT PUBLICATIONS BY BCDSS MEMBERS

<https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/en/publications>



# CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS





We want our conference reports to showcase the wide thematic range covered by our Cluster of Excellence. Researchers from various disciplines approach the topic of strong asymmetrical dependency through a variety of questions and perspectives across different epochs. Throughout the year, the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies organizes conferences with international scholars to enable this multi-disciplinary approach, flanked by series of workshops, seminars, lectures and panel discussions. The core questions and findings of these events will be found in the following pages.

Owing to the coronavirus pandemic and our commitment towards sustainability, hybrid and online conferences have become the new normal. The resulting exchanges across continents and time zones are proving to be highly stimulating and enriching.



## CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SLAVERY: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE CARIBBEAN

by Michael Zeuske



### Prof. Dr. Michael Max-Paul Zeuske

was Professor of Iberian and Latin American History at the University of Cologne (1993–2018), Professor of History (University of Havana, 2018–2019) and is Senior Research Professor at the BCDSS. He is a corresponding member of the Academia de la Historia, Havana, Cuba. He focuses on different forms of dependency in the Atlantic slavery (1400–1900), in the global history of slavery and in different local slaveries and slave trades on a micro-historical level as well as on life histories of enslaved people and slave traders.

### INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP MARCH 24–26, 2022

The workshop "Cultural Heritage and Slavery: Perspectives from the Caribbean", which took place virtually on March 24–26, 2022, was part of a BCDSS workshop series designed to cover all major regions of the Atlantic hemisphere. It was preceded by a workshop entitled "Cultural Heritage and Slavery: Perspectives from Europe", also held virtually in July 2021, and followed by the onsite workshop "Slavery and Dependency: New Perspectives on Heritage and German Global History", held in Bonn in July 2022.



In preparation for this series of workshops, there were very productive debates related to the notion of heritage and the global regions involved. In the run-up to the Caribbean heritage workshop, the main debates centered around the understanding of "heritage", i.e. whether the term refers just to the material heritage of accumulated capitals/profits from slavery and the slave trade, or – the meaning preferred by most slav-

ery historians – all other forms: philosophical, cultural, ethnological-anthropological, legal-historical, virtual, artistic, discursive, transcultural, gender, etc. The debate also touched on the question of whether activists should be involved, so that, ideally, a dialogue might develop.

The organizers opted for a broader interpretation of heritage, and to include activists. The addition "cultural heritage" was added to highlight this interpretation. Secondly, there was a major problem in addressing "the Caribbean": the already very old problem of what "Caribbean" actually is, i.e. what area is covered in historical as well as in today's understanding of the term, and which regions of the Caribbean should be addressed. Does it refer only to the English-speaking West Indies, which are area best known from a German-English perspective (mainly Jamaica and Barbados)? Does it cover only the large slavery islands (Jamaica, Barbados, Saint-Domingue/Haiti, Cuba, Puerto Rico), or simply all Caribbean islands (which would include a cluster of colonial territories with different slavery and colonial powers)? All Guianan colonies (Guiana/Guyana, Suriname, Cayenne/French Guiana (as is well known, formally part of the EU) are usually also counted among the Caribbean colonial areas.

As a result of this preparatory debate, it was decided to adopt the spatial concept of the so-called "gran Caribe" or "greater Caribbean," which includes all coasts and hinterlands from Saint Augustine (a Spanish foundation, now part of the US) to at least Brazilian Belém at the Amazon estuary, but above all the Caribbean coasts of the former Spanish colonial empire, which means: from Florida (Spanish until 1817) via Louisiana (Spanish 1763-1804) and Texas (Spanish/Mexican until 1836) to all Central American Caribbean coasts and the so-called *tierra firme* (the coasts of present-day Panamá, Costa Rica and Colombia as well as Venezuela).

To our regret, the large slave trading metropolises of the historically Spanish-speaking Caribbean were not represented at the workshop, such as Cartagena de Indias, Caracas, Veracruz and New Orleans. The Spanish colonial empire in the Americas was one of the great slavery empires in global history, and much larger in history than its modern footprint.

However, the workshop drew in multiple perspectives from the greater Caribbean. It ended with an evaluation and debate in a roundtable discussion by the organizers Stephan Conermann, Claudia Rauhut, Ulrike Schmieder & Michael Zeuske.

## LIST OF SPEAKERS AND TOPICS

### KEYNOTE SPEECH

Agustín Lao-Montes (University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA): Black Lives Beyond Slavery: Creolizing Ubuntu to Transcend the Modern/Colonial Dialectics of Eros and Thanatos

### PANEL I: HAITI AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Chair: Pia Wiegmink, BCDSS, University of Bonn

Kenrick Demesvar (University of Haiti, Port-au-Prince, Haiti): Cultural Heritage and Slavery in Haiti: Past, Present, and Future

Alexa Voss (BCDSS, University of Bonn): Santo Domingo: Restoring the Colonial City

### PANEL II: CUBA

Chair: Claudia Rauhut, BCDSS, University of Bonn

Zuleica Romay (Casa de las Américas, Cuba): "(Dis)continuidades en la representación de la mujer negra en ficciones cubanas de temática esclavista"

Roberto Zurbano (Casa de las Américas, Cuba): Turismo versus plantación: una propuesta de afro-reparación a la industria del turismo en Cuba

### PANEL III: ANGLOPHONE CARIBBEAN

Chair: Trevor Burnard, Wilberforce Institute for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation, University of Hull, UK

Kevin Farmer (Barbados Museum & Historical Society, Bridgetown, Barbados): Who Speaks for the Dead? Interpretation and Memorialization at the Enslaved Burial Ground at Newton, Barbados

Michael Barnett (University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica): The Clarion Call of Rastafari for Reparations for the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

Imani Tafari-Ama (University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica): Jamaica: From the Danish West Indies to the Virgin Islands of the United States: A Transatlantic Trialogue Confronting Colonial Heritage and its Enduring Legacy

### PANEL IV: FRANCOPHONE CARIBBEAN

Chair: Ulrike Schmieder, CAGS, Leibniz University Hannover

Rodolphe Solbiac (Université des Antilles, Campus de Schoelcher, Martinique): 'Activists' Removal of Colonial Statues in Martinique in 2020: A Demand for Reparations for African Slavery

Manuella Yung-Hing (Domaine de la Pagerie, Trois-Ilets, Martinique): Projets sur la question de l'héritage de l'esclavage à la Pagerie

### PANEL V: CIRCUM-CARIBBEAN

Chair: Michael Zeuske, BCDSS, University of Bonn

Rina Cáceres (Universidad de Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica): Slavery, Education, and the Justification of White Racial Supremacy

Alfredo Delgado Calderón: (Centro Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Veracruz, Mexico): Negros libres y esclavos de la Antigua y Nueva Veracruz

Tomás Straka: (Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, Caracas, Venezuela): Slavery and Public History in Venezuela (1999-2020)

Olivia M. Gomes da Cunha (Museu Nacional, Univer-sidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil): On the Im-possibility of Forgetting: Runaways, Refugees and Sentient Landscapes

Alfonso Cassiani Herrera (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá, Colombia): Herencia de la esclavitud en Cartagena de Indias



Osun State University (UNIOSUN), Nigeria, one of the BCDSS' international partner universities

## JOINT WORKSHOP BETWEEN UNIOSUN (NIGERIA) AND THE BCDSS

by Mary A. Afolabi-Adeolu, Boluwatife Akinro  
and Jutta Wimmler

### ONLINE WORKSHOP MARCH 30-31, 2022

Following discussions between the BCDSS and the Faculty of Humanities at Osun State University and the signing of a memorandum of understanding, members from both institutions met for a two-day workshop on Zoom on the 30th and 31st of March 2022. PhD students contributed a total of twelve papers, six from each institution, primarily from the fields of literary studies and history. As the list of speakers and topics below illustrates, Nigerian history and Nigerian narratives dominated the scene – ranging from the political economy of electricity in Nigeria to the works of Tunde Kelani (a prominent Nigerian filmmaker) or the construction of masculinities in Nigerian novels.

The interdisciplinary nature of the workshop allowed participants to be introduced to a wide range of contemporary scholarship in the global humanities, and feedback from colleagues and professors present (including UNIOSUN Dean Rotimi Fasan and BCDSS

speaker Stephan Conermann) reflected this interdisciplinarity. At times, of course, this also limited the depth of the discussion, as many present were unfamiliar with the topics presented. Occasional problems with the internet connection illustrated that the online format – though creating the opportunity for this workshop in the first place – ultimately is a poor substitute for in-person meetings.

Though we may have had some differences in opinion (for example, we had heated discussions on the topics of masculinity studies and dependency theory), this is exactly why academic exchange between scholars based in Europe and those based in Africa is so necessary. In his keynote address, Professor Olukoya Ogen stressed the significance of academic engagements like the workshop to enable postgraduate students to share ideas, gain fresh insights and enrich their studies. The BCDSS Research Group "The Concept of Slavery in African History" would like to invite other BCDSS members and our colleagues at UNIOSUN to continue this exchange. UNIOSUN's strong expertise in literary studies could be very useful to BCDSS members who do similar work. The expertise in African literatures that UNIOSUN staff brings to the table could broaden our understanding of ongoing academic discourses in Africa, and bring them into fruitful discussion with the study of literatures in other parts of the world.

We also recommend exchanges between scholars from both institutions as a way of deepening this partnership. Lecturers and graduate students from each institution could visit to present papers and network with their counterparts. Such exchanges would be mutually beneficial as UNIOSUN scholars would benefit from access to the BCDSS library resources and contacts, while BCDSS scholars would benefit from local contacts for field research and access to Nigerian archives.

### LIST OF SPEAKERS AND TOPICS

Boluwatife Akinro (Bonn): Vassals and Vagrants: Value and Belonging in Yorùbáland from the 19th Century till Present

Arogundade Nurudeen Olatoye (Osun State): A History of Electricity Supply, Management and Consumption in Western Nigeria, 1895-1982

Ricardo Márquez García (Bonn): Exploring historical forms of dependency through life stories. Slave trade and colonialism in the Cameroon Grassfields (1850-1950)

Lukas Wissel (Bonn): Asymmetrical Dependencies on the Lower Guinea Coast, c.1680-1750

Mariam Salaudeen (Osun State): Environmentalism and Ecologism in Nigerian Prose Fiction

Oyeleye Olamiposi (Osun State): Nigerian Film

Malik Ade (Bonn): Constructions of Masculinities and Dependencies in Nigerian Novels

Elizabeth Erivona (Osun State): Child Marriage in Fictional Works

Bettina Burger (Düsseldorf/Bonn): Africanjujuism's Outcast Heroes – Magic and Marginalisation in Nnedi Okorafor's and Marlon James's works

Mary Aderonke Afolabi-Adeolu (Bonn): Discovering Stories of 'Slavery' in the Life Writings of Nineteenth Century Recaptured West Africans.

Abayomi Jegede (Osun State): Traditional Medicine, Faith and Spirituality in South Western Nigeria, 1960 to date

Dr Temitope Fagunwa (Osun State): The Afro-Brazilian community in Lagos



#### Mary A. Afolabi-Adeolu

is a PhD researcher at the BCDSS. She holds a B.A. and M.A. in History from the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

and the University of Ibadan, both in Nigeria. At the BCDSS, she is part of the Research Group 'The Concept of Slavery in African History' where she is currently working on her PhD thesis which explores representations of 'slavery' and asymmetrical dependency in the narratives of nineteenth century recaptured West Africans.



#### Boluwatife Akinro

is a PhD researcher at the BCDSS. Her current project takes an interdisciplinary approach, combining history and cultural

studies to understand the cultural logics of servitude in Southwest Nigeria. Boluwatife has a background in literary and cultural studies, having earned an MA in English and American Studies from the University of Paderborn, and a BA in English and International Studies from Osun State University. Her work covers spatial politics, representation and media, and hegemony in the dimensions of class and race.



#### Dr. Jutta Wimmer

is postdoctoral researcher and coordinator of the Research Group "The Concept of Slavery in African History", holding a PhD in

history from the University of Graz, Austria. She is currently writing book about the European imagination of African Slavery 1500-1900. As Research Associate at the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder), she coordinated the DFG-funded project "The Globalized Periphery. Atlantic Commerce, Socioeconomic and Cultural Change in Central Europe (1680-1850)". She is interested in Africa's impact on Europe, both intellectually and economically.



## NORMS OF DEPENDENCY IN LATE ANTIQUE AND EARLY MEDIEVAL SOCIETIES

by Martin Schermaier

**BCDSS WORKSHOP**  
**BONN, MARCH 31 – APRIL 01, 2022**

Roman law and legal terminology were formative factors, both in ancient Mediterranean societies and in those of central and western Europe. When the *Constitutio Antoniniana* gave Roman citizenship to almost all inhabitants of the Empire in 212 AD, provincial courts and notaries adopted the rules and terminology of Roman civil law, *ius civile*, thereby replacing other legal traditions that were still prevalent in some provinces. But even after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the importance of Roman legal terminology and thought remained palpable: charters and testaments, bills of complaint, ecclesiastical legislation, post-Roman law collections, and even non-legal sources such as theological or historical treatises all witness to its continued influence.

But does this also apply to the terminology of dependency and slavery? What continuing influence did Roman (legal) terminology have on the description of dependency relations? Were there any new forms of dependency previously unknown to Roman law? If so, how were they described? What was the relationship between the new terms and the earlier ones? Did the Latin (technical) terminology persist or did new legal terms emerge as well?



The Wandalgarius manuscript, kept in the Stiftsbibliothek St. Gallen (Cod. Sang. 731), which contains the laws of the Visigoths (*lex Romana Visigothorum*), the Salian Franks (*lex Salica*) and the Alemanni (*lex Alamanorum*).

In order to discuss these and other questions on dependency relationships in the Latin West, renowned researchers from all over the world met at the BCDSS in Bonn from 31 March to 1 April 2022. The workshop was the first major event of the BCDSS after the pandemic, and was therefore anticipated with great interest by the researchers based in Bonn. Numerous doctoral students and staff from the most diverse areas of the BCDSS also took part.

They heard and discussed lectures by Boudewijn Sirks (Oxford/BCDSS), Stefan Esders (Berlin), Mary Sommar (Millersville), Noel Lenski (Yale), Harry Mawdsley (Tübingen), Simona Tarozzi (Bologna), Catherine Hezser (SOAS, London), Dominik Leyendecker (Cologne) and Brigitte Kasten (Saarbrücken). Julia Hillner, Julia Winnebeck, Matthias Becher, Konrad Vössing and Martin Schermaier spoke on behalf of the BCDSS.

The speakers presented very different cross-sections of the source material, ranging from the fifth to the ninth centuries. The subjects discussed included early medieval notarial forms (used in notaries) and conciliar legislation (enactments of synods) as well as post-Roman law codes and Carolingian capitularies (legislative acts). Of course, the speakers could not fully cover the abundance of sources and the large number of questions asked about their tradition, their normative quality and social reality. But they did provide a colourful and differentiated picture of how the Roman social order gradually disintegrated – partially preserving ancient concepts and descriptions – and gave way to changed forms of dependency.

However, this development took place in very different directions both regionally and temporally. In the Visigothic Empire and in the Lombard Empire (in what is currently Spain and northern Italy, respectively) Roman terminology was largely maintained and the social roles of slaves and coloni shifted only gradually. By contrast, in the Merovingian Empire (which covered much of modern-day France as well as parts of Germany and the Benelux countries) and especially in Frankish Gaul new forms of dependency emerged early on and – insofar as Latin terms were maintained – new legal differentiations can be found. The reason for this could be that the Franks were less Romanized than other gentes (i.e. Barbarian groups). Another possible explanation is that their social order differed more from that of the Roman population of Gaul than was the case in the relationship between Visigoths and Romans on the one hand, and Lombards and Romans on the other.

We should also not forget the role of the Roman Church in the cultural transition from Roman to early medieval societies. With the Latin language, it not only preserved the technical vocabulary, but it had also integrated the

Roman social order that had existed since late antiquity into its own structures. Therefore, the differences observed by scholars could also be related to timing and to the extent of Christianization.

Many social relationships – or the ways they are assessed in law – share similarities, but we need to ask whether these similarities are the result of the continuation of Roman models, or whether they are simply parallel developments that happened independently of each other. This became very clear through the examples of how fugitive slaves were treated (Tarozzi), the classification of freedmen in social hierarchies (Esders), or dependency relationships within families (Hezser).

The two-day workshop thus covered a wide spectrum of research on dependency relations in late antiquity and the early middle ages. The same applies to the different methodological approaches used by the researchers gathered in Bonn: there was both exegesis and empiricism; different scholars developed ethnological, socio-historical and legal-dogmatic arguments from their various findings. The workshop therefore ideally reflected the interdisciplinary orientation of the BCDSS. A small detail may illustrate this: almost all of the panelists knew each other's names from previously published writings but most had never met in person at a research event. The BCDSS thus succeeded once more in bringing together researchers who should indeed be working together in order to arrive at a deeper understanding of asymmetrical dependencies in premodern societies.



**Prof. Dr. Martin J. Schermaier**

is Professor of Roman Law and Civil Law at the University of Bonn, Director of the Institute for Roman Law and Comparative Legal History, and a full member of the North Rhine-Westphalian Academy of Sciences, Humanities and Arts. He teaches and researches classical Roman private law, current German civil law and the history of ideas of European law in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period. He is a Principal Investigator at the BCDSS and Speaker of Research Area C ("Institutions, Norms and Practices").



Illustrator: Monika Lang. Author: Nico Pizzolato. Curators: Anamarja Batista und Corinna Peres



Illustrator: Tim Robison. Author: Akin Sefer. Curators: Anamarja Batista und Corinna Peres

## COMBINING ACADEMIA AND ART IN HISTORICAL RESEARCH ON LABOR COERCION

by Anamarja Batista, Viola Müller & Corinna Peres

### WORKSHOP BONN, APRIL 21, 2022

How can history be represented, told, and conveyed in different media? Anamarja Batista, Viola Müller, and Corinna Peres ask this question in their ongoing project at the intersection of academia and art. The central element, studied by contributors from disciplines as diverse as history, anthropology, art history, media studies, and art, is the relation between labor coercion and remuneration in different areas and periods. The project aims to retrace and understand the specific scopes of action made available to a variety of actors by historical processes of change and transformation, such as the introduction of new legislative ordinances.

A special feature of this forthcoming publication is that the editors have approached graphic artists for collaboration, with the aim of finding out how visual forms of mediation—such as images—shift, challenge, and expand, but also limit historical narration. The illustrations that emerged from this collaboration now accompany the texts as visual 'partners.' In our workshop, we discussed three of these illustration sets alongside selected passages from the respective academic papers.

The workshop on combining academia and art in historical research took place on April 21, 2022 at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies. The interdisciplinary participants came from within and outside the BCDSS, and included art historians Charlotte Colding

Smith and Timo Hagen, historian Diego Schibeklinski, literature scholar Pia Wiegminck, and curator Wolfgang Stumpfe. The discussions revolved around the narrative powers and logics of images and text. Starting with individual and group analyses of selected illustrations by Tim Robinson, Monika Lang, and Daria Kuzmych, we interpreted the historical situations depicted, without having any knowledge of the texts. This facilitated intense engagement with the characteristics of visual narrative forms. We focused on image composition, technique, characters and storyline, and on atmosphere. On the one hand, the images offered various different interpretations, on the other hand, participants actually recognized and detected many questions and discussions that were raised in the texts. The element of fiction was part of the line of argument, and ambivalent statements led to relational webs of interpretation.

This became very visible with the illustration by Daria Kuzmych which accompanies Mohammad Tareq Hasan's anthropological paper on cultural discourse and resistance to coercion around sewing machine operators in the Bangladeshi garment factories. A collapsing column appears to separate the image into two halves, while at the same time a green-and-red piece of cloth establishes a connection. The discussants associated the events in the lower part of the image with protests, fire, and depictions of the Last Judgment. It was obvious to all that the protagonists in the upper part are employed in textile production in a closed space. It is that part of the illustration which conveys a certain tranquility, while the crowded lower part shows a moment of outcry, turmoil, and upheaval. We located the place of production in twenty-first-century Bangladesh, but the red fabric covering the ship also led us to find connections to the revolutionary spirit of the twentieth century.

In the second part of the workshop, we discussed the illustrations together with the text excerpts. We



Illustrator: Daria Kuzmych. Author: Mohammad Tareq Hasan. Curators: Anamarija Batista und Corinna Peres

reflected on argumentation and information content and discussed the specific characteristics of the textual narration. What is the common ground shared by image and text? What main differences are there? In the case of the Bangladeshi textile workers, the high density of information in Hasan's paper enabled us to follow his observations step by step, closely following the linear architecture of the text. The fragments of oral speech from Hasan's field interviews especially prompted us to find connections to the image. We immediately connected the workers' voices conveyed by the text with the voiceless anonymity of working people in Kuzmych's illustration. The discussion culminated in the questions of whether and to what extent researchers can give a voice to historical actors and understand experiences of coercion in labor through the combined means of visual expression and narrative storytelling. This finally brought us back to the thematic focus of the project: exploring coercion in remunerated labor relations across time and space.

All of the cases chosen concern contexts in which coercion is not immediately recognizable as such to scholarly inquiry. They investigate various manifestations of coercion in specific historical situations, questioning and redeveloping categories of analysis from different



Illustrator: Monika Lang. Author: Marjorie Carvalho de Souza. Curators: Anamarija Batista und Corinna Peres

disciplines. Against this background, our project intends to challenge the binary opposition of wage labor versus forced labor by showing that various mechanisms of coercion have been used in combination with wages throughout the centuries. Thereby, we seek to re-integrate the study of wage labor more tightly into current debates on global labor history.

With this agenda in mind, it is not only a question of what we decide to study, but also of how best to communicate or present our findings. In this project, both scholars and illustrators together create visual scenes in their imaginations and narratives. A creative dialog can be fostered by combining these two approaches that testify to the existence of different ways of dealing with and interpreting the past. Conveying labor history through different media thus contributes to situating academia within a larger spectrum of interdisciplinary and non-scholarly works. Our hope is that we can make history more accessible for audiences from a variety of backgrounds, to serve as an innovative and creative tool for teaching, and to raise awareness of the fact that narrating history is always contingent on the medium chosen and its inherent constraints and possibilities.

The workshop organizers thank the participants for their inspiring contributions and insights.



**Anamarija Batista**

is a researcher, lecturer and freelance curator. As an economist and cultural scientist, she is interested in interdisciplinary and intermedial approaches. Her

focus lies on the exploration and analysis of possibilities of representation and critique of social mechanisms on the one hand through artistic practice and on the other hand through scientific text-based lines of argumentation or graphic forms.



**Viola Franziska Müller**

is a postdoctoral researcher and social historian at the BCDSS specialized in slavery

and labor coercion. Her research interests include inequality, illegality, race, and resistance in the urban Americas, with a special focus on the 19th-century US South.



**Corinna Peres**

is a university assistant at the Institute for Economic and Social History at the University of Vienna. Her research focuses

on historical semantics, the history of labour, slavery and the slave trade in the Mediterranean, with a particular interest in Tuscany in the late Middle Ages.



## BELONGING, LOYALTY, AND DEPENDENCY IN THE EARLY MODERN OTTOMAN EMPIRE

by Veruschka Wagner

### ONLINE WORKSHOP MAY 5-6, 2022

The bilingual workshop on the society of the early modern Ottoman Empire brought together scholars from across borders to discuss concepts of dependency, loyalty, and belonging. They did this by focusing not only on relationships between slaves and slave owners, but also on patronage and other forms of dependencies, including for instance dependency on religion or places of belonging. The workshop with two panels in English and two in Turkish was organized by Fırat Yaşa, BCDSS Fellow, and Veruschka Wagner, BCDSS Investigator. All nine speakers are historians of the Ottoman Empire with expertise in social, legal, and economic history.

The common ground for the contributions was the question of how forms of belonging and loyalty could be traced in different sources. The participants therefore focused on the following questions: According to which criteria can loyalty and belonging be analyzed and described? How are these terms used? What kind of

similarities and differences of loyalty and belonging can be found? How did dependencies determined by loyalty and/or belonging shape (different parts of) early modern Ottoman society?

The workshop aimed to refine these terms and concepts by analyzing the lives and histories of individuals or social groups across different regions and social classes of the Ottoman Empire. Most contributions dealt with the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The talks included a wide range of topics and showed a certain diversity by focusing on individuals in different positions, their status in relation to others, their superiors, or their tasks or professions.

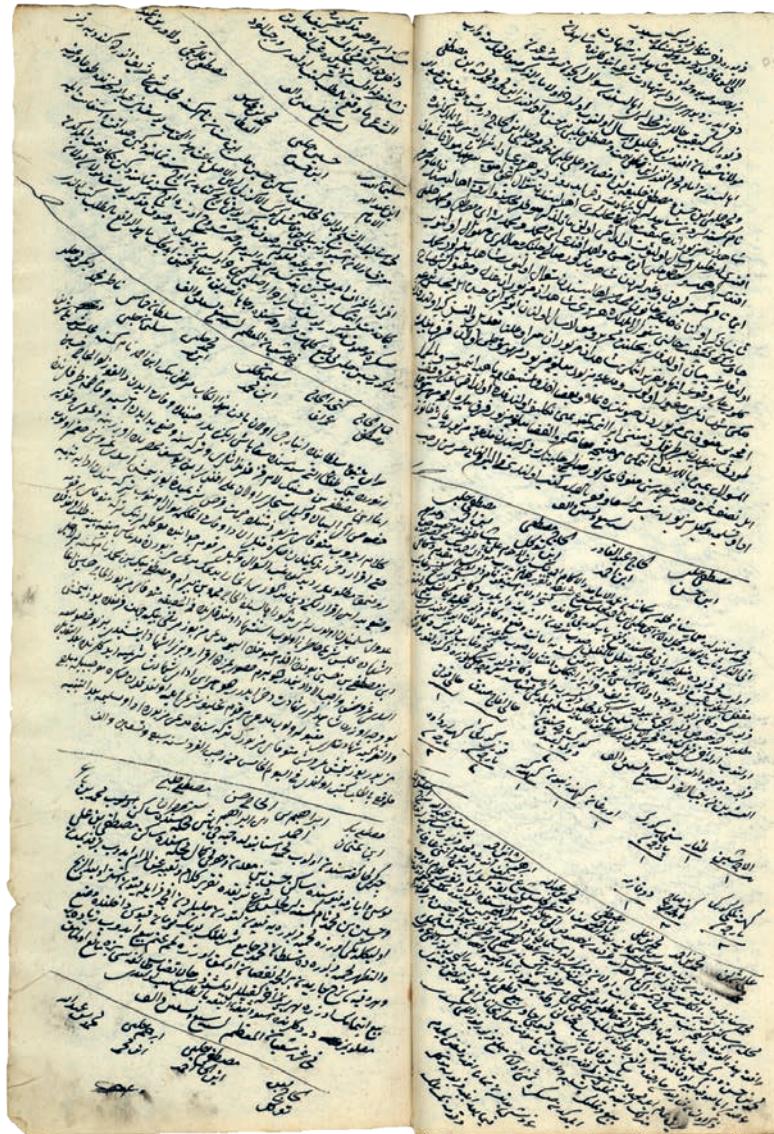
The first speaker of the first panel was Günhan Börekçi (Central European University Vienna), who traced the career of Nasuh Pasha, a dignitary who was executed in 1614. Börekçi elaborated on the network and persons around Nasuh Pasha during his career, which culminated in the special status of a "royal favorite." Börekçi highlighted the importance of patronage relationships and shifting loyalties whose object could be individuals, but also the dynasty.

The second speaker of the first panel was Boğaç Ergene (University of Vermont) with a talk about gift-exchange for solidarity and corruption in Ottoman jurisprudential thought. He asked about the circumstances gifts were perceived as illicit and illegitimate, and those under which they were accepted. He suggested looking at the performance of gift-giving rather than the purpose of the object given to differentiate between gift and bribe. Ergene also emphasized that the Ottoman Empire was a society that lacked security, and that this was one reason why connections, networks and loyalties were of great importance.



From the English - Ottoman Turkish dictionary

The second panel of the first day, which was held in Turkish, started with Işık Tamdoğan (CNRS Paris) who examined the Greek Orthodox population of the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century and their feelings of belonging. For her research, Tamdoğan focused on the Anatolian shore of Istanbul and the Cilician region,



Ottoman Court Records of 17th c. Istanbul

taking a comparative approach by combining administrative sources from the eighteenth and personal narratives from the twentieth century. Her analysis showed that the Greek Orthodox population was not only diverse in itself, but also developed different local senses of belonging that could coexist simultaneously.

Nurcan Abaci (Uludağ University) addressed conflicts of religious and social belonging experienced by converts in early Ottoman society. He particularly focused on a single case from the Ottoman court records in Bursa in the late sixteenth century. In his talk, he questioned the widely-held assumption that Ottoman Jewish converts to Islam had to cut themselves off from their previous Jewish networks and move away from their neighborhoods. By contrast, the case examined by Abaci revealed that in practice the reasons and the impact for conversion could reveal different and layered forms of belonging and dependency for individuals.

The last paper of this panel was given by Nilüfer Günay Alkan (Bursa Uludağ University). Günay Alkan's study concentrated on relationships of belonging within families in the sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire. The focus of her talk was on family members who were abducted or otherwise disappeared, and the behavior of other family members, leading to the assumption that gender determines the way that individuals perceive their options of agency (i.e. control over their lives). Günay Alkan showed that the physical absence of a person also led to the dissolution of personal ties.

The second day started with a contribution by Veruschka Wagner, BCDSS Investigator, who looked at the mutual bond between slave and slave owner. She traced notions of loyalty by analyzing court records in a variety of documents such as manumission deeds, donations, and slave contracts. Wagner came to the conclusion that an argument can be made for the existence of mutual, reciprocal loyalty as both parties had to fulfill their conditions, but that the asymmetry of the slave-slave owner relationships remains.

N. İpek Hüner Cora (Boğaziçi University) focused on loyalties and disloyalties between women. She drew on a variety of sources from different eras to look for moments and spaces of interactions where women came together. These could be instances, experiences, and spaces that were marked by women's presence and their encounters. Hüner Cora showed moments of support, help, and solidarity, and pointed to the need for further research on this topic.

The second panel on the second day began with Turan Açık's (Aksaray University) presentation, in which Açık examined belonging to places in both concrete and abstract senses. Açık's study showed that spaces and places can be considered to be parameters for marking different kinds of belonging. For this purpose, Açık analyzed some Turkish Ottoman concepts and terms of spaces and places used in Ottoman court records, and shed light on their different meanings. This approach revealed different forms of belonging that have significance for social structuring.

Zeynep Dörtok Abaci (Bursa Uludağ University) and Fırat Yaşa (at the time of writing BCDSS Fellow, Düzce University) addressed the unstudied topic of smell in the Ottoman Empire. After a theoretical introduction to the importance of the sense of smell, they used individual examples to illustrate how significant the sense of smell is for individuals, but also for groups within a society. Although not dealt with in concrete terms, the audience was able to deduce which forms of belonging and dependency could emerge through scents in the most diverse areas.

Contributions and discussions showed that forms of belonging and loyalty were manifold in early modern Ottoman society. Since networks and personal ties were of the greatest relevance, loyalty and belonging played a vital role in the lives of individuals. What appeared as the most important result was the significance and need of clarifying terminology. Further discussion is needed to concretize terms that can be considered in Ottoman Turkish to describe the concepts we are looking for. Belonging to a place does not necessarily require loyalty, while loyalty to a patron does not necessarily require belonging.

#### **Dr. Veruschka Wagner**

is a Research Associate at the Department for Islamic Studies and Near Eastern Languages at the University of Bonn and Investigator at the BCDSS. Her current research project is part of the priority program Transottomanica funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and focuses on agency and mobility of slaves from the Black Sea Region in Istanbul in the 17th century.



Some of the workshop speakers and participants in the garden of Universitätsforum, Bonn.

## DIVINE AND HUMAN DEPENDENCIES IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

by Dr. des. Kirsten M. Schäfers/Niklas Wichmann

### BCDSS WORKSHOP BONN, MAY 13-14, 2022

In May 2022, the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) hosted the two-day workshop "Divine and Human Dependencies in the Ancient Near East and the Old Testament", organized by Prof. Dr. Ulrich Berges and Dr. des. Kirsten M. Schäfers. The aim of the workshop was to explore the various forms of human and divine asymmetrical dependencies in the Ancient Near East (ANE) and the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible (OT/HB) using both textual and material resources, esp. iconographic ones. In order to establish a transdisciplinary perspective on the topic, the workshop brought together scholars from ANE Studies, Egyptology, Iconographic Studies and OT/HB Studies. The program had four focal points of investigation: "Dependency and human relations in the ANE", "Iconographic perspectives on divine and human dependencies", "Specifications of human and divine dependencies in ANE and OT/HB sources", and "Dependency, liberation, and justice in the OT/HB".



Dr. des. Kirsten M. Schäfers in conversation (in the background: Dr. Sarah Hollaender and David Smith)

In their introductory address, U. Berges and K.M. Schäfers emphasized the Cluster's ambition to deconstruct the dichotomy of "slavery" vs. "freedom". They cast light on the gradual and dynamic nature of asymmetrical dependency and its constitution in social relationships. Accordingly, they stressed that the challenge lied within being attentive to the in-between spaces on the large range between slavery and freedom and the many forms of asymmetrical dependencies that often occurred in an intersectional way. Against the background of this broader research agenda, they pointed to the importance of analyzing the intermingling of divine and human dependencies in antiquity as these were integrally inscribed into societies.



Prof. Dr. Ulrich Berges discussing "The difficult relationship of dependency and justice in the Old Testament"

The first panel focused on dependency and human relations in the ANE. Dr. Vitali Bartash (BCDSS) elaborated on the demography and status of "donated" temple workers in Early Mesopotamia. He located this social group in a state between slavery and freedom and emphasized the special concept of their dependency from humans they worked for and gods they were donated to. Prof. Ludwig Morenz (BCDSS) offered a re-reading of the relations between Egyptian and Canaanites in Middle Bronze Age Sinai by analyzing the origin of the Canaanite alphabetic writing. He showed how the agency of

dependent and colonized workers led to the emergence of cultural development. The guest speakers within the second panel moved to an iconographic perspective on dependency relations in different cultural contexts from the ANE. Their contributions were based on a range of iconographic artefacts such as figures and figurines, sarcophagi and paintings. Here, the focus lied on the pictorial grammar of dependency. The artefacts were analyzed with regard to their depicted roles and gestures, their composition, their historic setting, their ideological function and their relation to social reality and representation. Dr. Thomas Staubli (Fribourg) explored the grammar of strong asymmetrical dependency in Egyptian iconography and its varying and multifaceted impacts on OT traditions and ideology. Dr. Izaak de Hulster (Göttingen) proposed a detailed taxonomy and categories of strong asymmetrical dependencies in iconography distilled from a broad overview of ANE material. Prof. Dr. Katharina Pyschny (Berlin) offered a new typology for a set of woman and child figurines from Persian Period Israel/Palestine. She analyzed the embodied social relations with regard to varying grades of dependency of the depicted children and the idealized female role of caring, while also addressing the unclear human or divine character of these figurines. Dr. Sarah Hollaender (Berlin) complemented the ANE-related results with a Roman Era corpus of Sarcophagi. Her paper stressed that depictions of human wives as the goddess Virtus protecting their husbands as patrons exhibited a complex intermingling of divine-human dependencies that also allowed for a rewriting of wife-husband relationships in terms of interdependency.



Prof. Dr. Ulrich Berges und Prof. Dr. Jan Dietrich (both BCDSS) in conversation with Dr. Thomas Staubli (Fribourg)

During the third panel, the (inter-)dependency between humans and gods moved to the center of discussion. Prof. Dr. Jan Dietrich (BCDSS) focused on human dependencies upon gods by presenting a development of the notion of gods being the source of human agency in epic and juridical contexts. Dr. des. Kirsten Schäfers (BCDSS), on the other hand, accentuated the divine part of divine-human relationships of dependency in ANE and HB material. She analyzed how divine needs and divine

dependencies upon human beings exert a self-limiting effect on divine agency. The fourth panel then shifted the spotlight exclusively to the Old Testament. Prof. Dr. Reinhard Achenbach (Münster) argued that a root of a supranational law lied within the prophetic scriptures of the Old Testament thus problematizing the biblical question of a universal ethos deriving from the vision of a Zion-Law community. Prof. Dr. Ulrich Berges (BCDSS) evaluated the discourse of asymmetrical dependencies in the form of slavery in the Old Testament and came to the conclusion that the scripture can rather not be regarded as propelling the abolishment of slavery. While the Old Testament does challenge certain forms of asymmetrical dependencies by advocating for the personae miserae, slaves remain a neglected social group.



PD Dr. Izaak de Hulster (Göttingen, on screen) in conversation with the plenum and Prof. Dr. Christian Frevel (Bochum)

### THE OUTCOME

The lively and extensive discussions of the subject matters condensed into a set of general insights for future research agendas: With regard to iconographic artefacts, the question of their function needs special attention: Were those artefacts used to exert or deconstruct certain forms of dominance? On the other hand, were they even used as a source of empowerment? Here, the pictorial grammars of dependency are also crucial, esp. with regard to gender and social roles. In all panels, the analysis of textual and material resources highlighted the intersectional ways in which the dependencies occurred. Religious, economic, social, ethnic and gender aspects frequently interfere in social relations, institutions and imperial contexts. At the same time, the interfering of divine/theological and human/practical dependencies is an important focal point that should be approached with special concern for its pragmatics. Further discussions focused on the semantics of certain key terms. How can the notion "strong asymmetrical" be further differentiated? Are there weak asymmetrical dependencies? Again, a more gradual perspective was favored to recognize all different forms of asymmetrical dependencies that might materialize at different times in

various degrees, as well as a discrimination of structural and situational aspects. Taking up a recent proposal of C. Antweiler (BCDSS), the speakers agreed that it is helpful to differentiate between the terms dependence (singular instances of subjugation, domination, or control) and dependency (overarching, long-term mode of relation or interrelation). From the perspective of methodology, the question arose in how far contemporary scholars almost inevitably read their modern perspectives and beliefs into the textual and material resources at hand thus distorting and misrepresenting their meaning. These concerns were especially addressed with regard to the application of modern notions of freedom and dependency onto the scripture of the Old Testament.

Studying the ANE and the Old Testament is a crucial way to arrive at a profound understanding of how asymmetrical dependencies developed in time and operate until today. It offers possible ways to decenter from modern/post-modern/Eurocentric truth claims about dependency and slavery and can identify certain aspects that are of universal relevance, today as well as 5000 to 2000 years ago. The impulses and insights gained at the conference are important for any future research within the cluster. Here, major tasks would be to "translate" the insights from the sphere of theology or oriental studies into a language that finds its recipients in a secular world of the 21th century.



#### Dr. des. Kirsten M. Schäfers

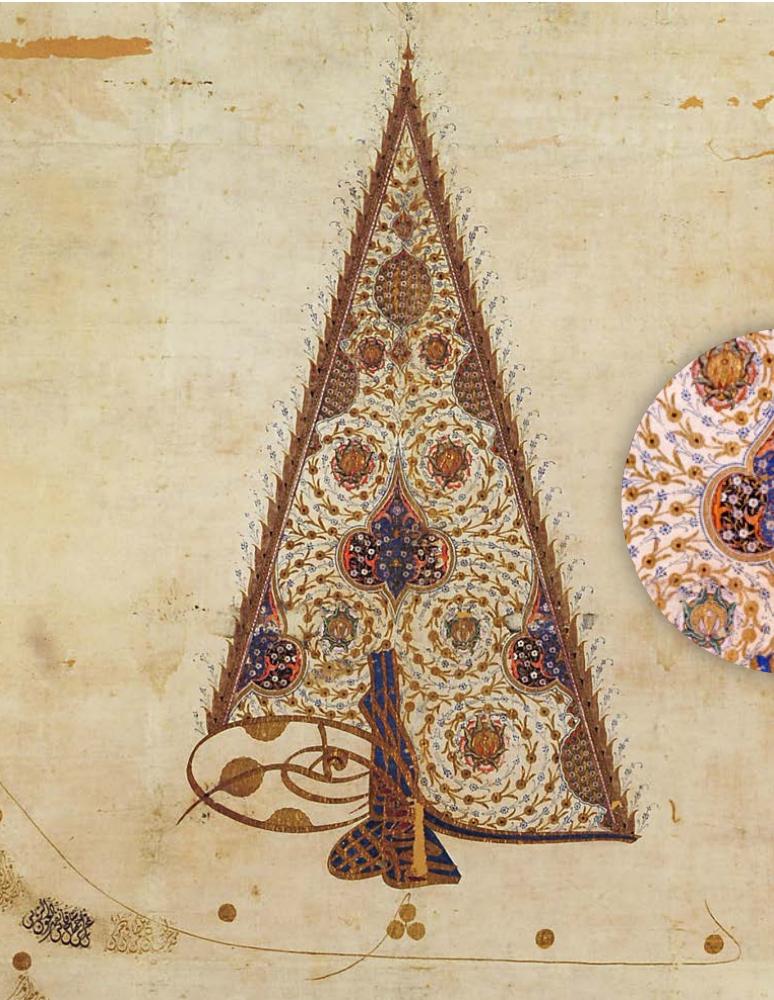
is BCDSS Investigator and 'Akademische Rätin auf Zeit' at the Department of Old Testament Studies, Faculty of Catholic Theology. In her research project "(Inter )Dependency?

Human-Divine Relationships in the Hebrew Bible" she investigates the constructions of dependency in human-divine relationships in the textual corpus of the Hebrew Bible and its Ancient Near Eastern contexts. Her research particularly explores the limitations of divine agency within the framework of human-divine interactions.



#### Niklas Wichmann

is a student assistant and tutor for the Biblical Hebrew language courses at the Department of Old Testament Studies, Faculty of Catholic Theology. He is currently working on his master thesis on the political implications of Isaiah 30 and 31.



Deed of loan document with tughra (sultan's calligraphic signature), Istanbul 1737.  
Gold, goauche and ink on paper.

## CULTURAL SYMBOLS OF EARLY MODERN RULE. A GLOBAL COMPARATIVE APPROACH

by Christiane Czygan

**CONFERENCE, UNIVERSITY OF BONN,  
DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES AND MID-  
DLE-EASTERN LANGUAGES  
MAY 19-21, 2022**

Symbols are created as result of a process of abstraction. Their articulation and presentation create meaning, which makes them a potent device, particularly for political purposes:

First, the intellectual designation attributed to an object or a ritual transforms it into a symbol. Taking recourse to Ernst Cassirer's tripartite model of abstraction (from the sensual feeling), transcendence (of the sensual view), and meaning (with its abstract assignment), at

this conference we would like to analyze the various physical, ideal, and ritual phenomena constituting symbols.

With the aim of investigating legitimization of the ruler and cultural transfer in the framework of the semiotic triangle of Cassirer's model, a variety of symbols are suggested for analysis within the tripartite classification between imagination, artifacts, and rituals.

This conference explores symbols of legitimacy in a transcultural context, the goal being to identify the meaning of various imperial practices as well as acts of opposition to them. We intend to shed light on the use of these early modern symbols in politics and to reveal their role in legitimizing rulers and political authority. The conference also directs attention to cultural specificities and trans – cultural commonalities of selected symbols. To this end, it focusses on the function of specific objects, rituals, and ideas in the context of imperial rule and on the agency of those employing them. To achieve this goal, we invited a distinguished group of outstanding international scholars drawn from various disciplines with different regional foci. We will bring together literary historians, art historians, cultural historians, and historians of Middle Eastern and European studies. The concluding session discussed various aspects related to global entanglements and symbolic paradigms.

Full conference report:



**Dr. Christiane Czygan**  
is a Research Associate at the Department of Islamic Studies and Middle-Eastern Languages at Bonn University, where she teaches Ottoman History and Ottoman Literature. Her field

of research is premodern Ottoman poetry and history, conceptual history and history of the press. She currently edits and analyses a manuscript by Sultan Süleyman from 1554. Holding a PhD from the University of Hamburg, and having studied Ottoman History and Literature with Orhan Şaik Gökyay in Istanbul, she published *Zur Ordnung des Staates. Jungosmanische Intellektuelle und ihre Konzepte in der Zeitung Hürriyet* (Klaus Schwarz 2012). She has also published one book and a number of articles on premodern Divan poetry.

# EVENTS & PREVIEW

## JANUARY TO MARCH 2023

January 16, 2023

**BOOK LAUNCH  
JULIA HILLNER  
HELENA AUGUSTA.  
MOTHER OF THE EMPIRE**

Organized by Zentrum für  
Religion und Gesellschaft  
(ZERG)

January 18, 2023

**LAUNCH  
OF THE LIBRARY  
OF ANCIENT  
SLAVERY**

Organized by Winfried Schmitz  
(BCDSS) and Cécile Jeblawei  
(Press and PR, BCDSS)

January 19-20, 2023

**COERCION AND  
HISTORICAL CHANGE  
IN THE SITE. A SOURCE-  
BASED APPROACH**

**International Workshop**  
Organized by Christian De Vito  
(BCDSS), in cooperation with  
WORCK

February 3, 2023

**ECOLOGICAL INTER/  
DEPENDENCIES: STRONG  
ASYMMETRICAL  
RELATIONS AND MORE-  
THAN-HUMAN WORLDS**

**International Workshop**  
Organized by Jennifer Leetsch &  
Zeynep Gökce (both BCDSS)

March 3, 2023

**BCDSS BOOK LAUNCH:**

<b>Zeuske</b> Afrika – Atlantik – Amerika: Sklaverei und Sklavenhandel	<b>Witzenrath</b> The Russian Empire, Slaving and Liberation, 1480–1725
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Organized by Janico Albrecht  
(Publications, BCDSS) and Cécile  
Jeblawei (Press and PR, BCDSS)

March 29-31, 2023

**SOCARE - COMPETING  
MEMORIES:  
REMEMBERING AND  
FORGETTING SLAVERY  
AND INDENTURES**

Organized by Sinah Kloss  
(BCDSS), Andrea Gremels  
(Goethe University Frankfurt)  
& Ulrike Schmieder (Leibniz  
University Hannover)

# Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture Series

EVENT SCHEDULE  
JANUARY- MARCH 2023

## JANUARY

**January 16, 2023, 4:15 pm CET (hybrid)\***

**JULIA HARNONCOURT**  
(University of Luxembourg)

*Unfree labour relations in Brazil's Amazon region*

**January 23, 2023, 4:15 pm CET (online)**

**BENEDETTA ROSSI**  
(University College London)

*Slavery and Forced Labor in the West African Sahel: A Comparative Approach*

**January 30, 2023, 4:15 pm CET, (online)**

**CHLOE IRETON**  
(University College London)

*Imagining Freedom: Enslaved Black people in Sevilla and their personal cartographies of the Atlantic World*

## FEBRUARY

**February 6, 2023, 4:15 pm CET, (hybrid)\***

**RENS TACOMA**  
(Leiden University)

*Freedom in slavery. Inscribing slavery in the Greek East, 1c-3c CE*

**February, 13, 2023, 4:15 pm CET, (hybrid)\***

**SIDH LOSA MENDIRATTA**  
(Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra)

*Shaping Old Goa: Slavery, Caste and Religion in the Capital of the Estado da Índia (sixteenth to eighteenth centuries)*

**February, 27, 2023, 4:15 pm CET, (hybrid)\***

**ELISA-MARIA HEMER**  
(Herder Institute, Marburg)

*"You will listen to every name!" Destinies of young women working as maids in interwar Poland*

## MARCH

**March 6, 2023, 4:15 pm CET, (hybrid)\***

**JOHANNES PREISER-KAPELLER**  
(Austrian Academy of Sciences)

*Loyal servants of the realm or swarms of locusts? Mobilisations of military and civil labour force for the empires of Western Afroeurasia in the aftermath of the First Plague Pandemic, 8th-9th centuries CE*

**March 13, 2023, 4:15 pm CET, (online)**

**LARISSA CORRÉA**  
(Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro)

*Precarious Work and Labor Regulation in Brazil: Rural and Domestic Workers Struggling for Citizenship in the Worlds of Labor (1930-2016)*

**March 20, 4:15 pm CET, (hybrid)\***

**NITIN VARMA**  
(HU Berlin)

*Servant Lives in the Colonial Archives*

**March 27, 4:15 pm CEST, (online)**

**LARA PUTNAM**  
(University of Pittsburgh)

*Title to be affirmed*



IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN AN EVENT  
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\*Conference room, ground floor (0.018), Niebuhrstraße 5

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CURRENT EVENTS AND PUBLIC  
LECTURES AT THE BCDSS



PUBLIC LECTURES RECORDINGS ON  
BCDSS YOUTUBE CHANNEL



The magazine **DEPENDENT** is published twice annually by the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) and contains information, descriptive articles and reports about its research projects and findings, as well as its publications and events. A feature article provides insights on research into areas related to strong asymmetrical dependency. The magazine is sent out by e-mail in PDF format or in print. Information on how to subscribe and future issues can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/dependent-magazine>

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Contributions identified by name reflect the opinion of the author(s) and are not to be understood as official statements by the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS).

#### PICTURE CREDIT

[cover image]: 'Wooden slip' from the northwest of the Han Empire (206 BCE–220 CE), modern Gansu Province, containing the formal heading of a memorial. Its sender omits his family name and self-deprecatingly calls himself fen tu chen糞土臣, "(Your) bond servant (standing on) defecated soil"; [p.4/5] 'stone relief', both courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica. [p.6/7] 'Shiji' published by Shangwu yinshu guan, Beijing 1969, first edition and 'Wenxuan' published

by Yiwen yinshu guan, Taipeh 1967, fifth edition, both Library of the Faculty of East Asian Studies, Bochum. [p.8] AdobeStock\_489975284 [p.10] AdobeStock\_490156204 [p.16] Diversity: all photos BCDSS. [p17] 'Antike Sklaverei' teaching resource: ©GDKE/ Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Foto: Th. Zühmer. [p.14] Reading and Discussion: all photos BCDSS. [p.15-17] Frauenmuseum, Exhibition catalogue (p. 12, 17, 21, 23) courtesy of Bauhausarchiv, Centropa, Estate of T. Lux Feininger, Fortepan (<https://fortepan.hu/en/>), Hungarian Photography Museum, Maria Austria Instituut, NL, Nederlands Fotomuseum. [p.18-19] Diversity poster: Alina Gläser, BCDSS; photo BCDSS. [p.19] 'Antike Sklaverei' teaching resource: GDKE/ Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Foto: Th. Zühmer [p.20-25] Bangladesh: all photos Anas Ansar. [p.64/27] Peru: all photos Danitza L. Márquez Ramírez. [p.28-30] Ecuador: all photos Tamia Viteri. [p.31-32] Nicosia: all photos Nolwenn Guedea. [p.33-35] Korea: p.33: Jung-Joo Kim, The Academy of Korean Studies (16 June 2022), p.34/35: all photos "Album of Genre Paintings by Sin Yun-bok" (heritage.go.kr). [p.46] Cultural Heritage: AdobeStock\_176901646 [p.48] Osun State University, Nigeria. [p.50] Norms of Dependency: St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 731, 342pp ([www.e-codices.ch](http://www.e-codices.ch)). [p.52/53] Academic and Art: p.52: Illustrator: Monika Lang. Author: Nico Pizzolato. Curators: Anamarija Batista und Corinna Peres; Illustrator: Monika Lang. Author: Marjorie Carvalho de Souza. Curators: Anamarija Batista und Corinna Peres; p.53 left: Illustrator: Tim Robison. Author: Akın Sefer. Curators: Anamarija Batista und Corinna Peres; right: Illustrator: Daria Kuzmych. Author: Mohammad Tareq Hasan. Curators: Anamarija Batista und Corinna Peres. [p.54] Belonging, Loyalty, Dependency: Adobe Stock #225145918. [p.57-59] Divine and Human Dependencies: all photos Olaf Pakosch. [p.60] Cultural Symbols: courtesy of the Museum für Kunst & Gewerbe, Hamburg.

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#### OTHER SUBJECTS AND PERSPECTIVES FROM THE BCDSS

Over the coming years, the BCDSS will continue to publish information about its current research projects on its website, and to provide background information on subjects related to the overall topic of dependency. BCDSS scholars will also comment on social developments from their own perspectives. In the "Interviews" section, they talk about the conditions of their work, new methods and the changing nature of research communication.



#### THE BONN CENTER FOR DEPENDENCY AND SLAVERY STUDIES (BCDSS)

The Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) hosts the Cluster of Excellence "Beyond Slavery and Freedom", which aims to overcome the binary opposition of "slavery versus freedom". For that we approach the phenomenon of slavery and other types of strong asymmetrical dependencies (e.g. debt bondage, convict labor, tributary labor, servitude, serfdom, and domestic work as well as forms of wage labor and various types of patronage) from methodologically and theoretically distinct perspectives.



The research cluster is part of the framework of the Excellence Strategy of the Federal Government and the *Länder* and is free and independent in the selection and realization of its research projects.

Our Cluster of Excellence is a joint project of scholars from the fields of Anthropology, Archaeology, History, Law, Literary Studies, Area Studies (including The History of the Islamicate World, Japanese and Chinese Studies, Tibetan Studies), Sociology and Theology. We propose "strong asymmetrical dependency" as a new key concept that includes all forms of bondage across time and space.



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