

## Working Groups at the BCDSS

### Empires and Colonialism across Times and Spaces

#### The working group reaches out:

- to address an issue which cuts across all research areas of the cluster
- to flag out a perspective which sheds light on various epochs from early and ancient history
- to the 20th century and our times (and thus to help support current research of the cluster while at the same time reflecting upon the future strategic development of the cluster)
- to explore frames and contexts of social dependencies
- to study how power informs both dependencies in small social units (which are at the core of the cluster's research) and big histories of empires and colonialism
- to navigate the differences between empire and colonialism in terms of Weberian ideal types while at the same time paying due attention to empirical overlaps throughout history
- to discuss the thesis – formulated by some of the authors of the recent world history series published by Harvard University Press and C.H. Beck – that empires made colonialism and the modern globalized world (roughly from early modern history onward)
- to relate that discussion to scholarship as postcolonial studies, dependency theory, Immanuel Wallerstein's world system theory and publications which say that in our politically decolonized world global flows of commodities and thus economies are still informed by dependencies reminiscent of colonialism (which also means to reflect upon the relation between dependency and inequality)
- to put heritages of imperialism and colonialism and their current critiques on display as a link between past and present: in taking down monuments of colonial actors or at least debating their status western societies are becoming aware of how colonialism and its heritage still inform western ways of thinking and theorizing the world and notions of culture, society and economy. Can we differentiate decolonization into three phases – political, economic and cultural – with the latter two still on the agenda of the world we live in?

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