

Monday, 12.06.2023; 4:15 - 6:00 pm CET

Claudia Jarzebowski, Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery, Germany:

**Trauma, Experience, Emotion. Children and Dependency in Early Modern History**

**Abstract:**

For a long time, children have been a largely neglected group in historiography. During the last decade researchers of the history of childhood have shown that even though children did usually not leave behind well-written autobiographies to posterity or to the archives, it is both possible and desirable to include children in historical research. Children offer new perspectives on social dynamics and expand the range of historical anthropology. When looked at from the perspective of Slavery and Dependency Studies, new questions also emerge. The leading questions in my presentation are: What did life under the circumstances of enslavement and strong asymmetrical dependency do to children? What were the effects, and how are they to be traced and understood? One approach I will follow is drawing upon Trauma Studies, a branch largely ignored by historians of premodernity. However, questions asked in Trauma Studies have also been asked (and should be emphasized) in Slavery and Dependency Studies: How does it become possible and meaningful to investigate those who have left but a few traces, those who might never have had words to express their experiences of violence, of torture, of coerced separation as a young person, those who never made it into adulthood and became a memorable person? Concomitantly, the lecture discusses the interconnectedness of Slavery and Dependency Studies when considered from children's perspectives.

**Bio:**

Claudia Jarzebowski is a historian of early modern history and a professor at the BCDSS. Her expertise includes the history of childhood and emotion, kinship and violence, sexuality and gender. She currently works on schools for enslaved children in Cape Town and Madras.