Epic titles and terminologies such as "antiquity", "baroque", the "classical age", the "renaissance", or "post-modernity", the "long 19th" or "short 20th" centuries are more than mere tools used pragmatically to arrange school curricula or museum collections. In most disciplines based on historical methods the use of these terminologies carries particular imaginaries and meanings for the discursive construction of nations and communities. Many contemporary categories and periodisations have their roots in European teleologies, religious or historical traditions and thus are closely linked to particular power relations. As part of the colonial encounter they have been translated into new "temporal authenticities" in Africa, Asia and the Americas, as well as in Europe. German historians in particular, in C.H. Williamson's ironic description, "have an industry they call 'Periodisierung' and they take it very seriously." Periodisation, this splitting up of times into neatly balanced divisions is, after all, a very arbitrary proceeding and should not be looked upon as permanent. In producing and reproducing periodisations, historians structure possible narratives of temporality, they somehow "take up ownership of the past." (Janet L. Nelson) imposing particular "hegemonies of historicity" (Frances Har-Tog). Accordingly, periodisations are never inert or innocent, indeed, they have been interpreted as a "theft of History." (Jack Goody)

The aim of this conference is to uncover some of the dynam-ics behind particular cultural and historical uses of periodisation schemes, as concepts for ordering the past, and thus to reconsider these terminologies "devised to think the world." (Sebastian Conrad). Periodisations are culturally determined. They beg for systematic comparison in order to identify the contextual specificity and contingency of particular understandings of particular historical epochs. An interdisciplinary and transregional perspective allows for a reconsideration of the (non-)transferability of historical periodisations and the possibility to work out categories of historical analysis that go beyond nation-bound interpreta-tive patterns.
Saturday, December 9

10.00 The Making of Periodisation Schemes
Chair: Andreas Eckert (Universität Zürich)
Periodisation, Part II

11.00 The Paradox of Palestinian National History: Colonized Periodization
Ihediwa Nkemjika Chimee (University of Delhi)

11.30 Morphologies and Models of Periodisation, Part I
Chair: Andreas Eckert (FTS; HCTS, Universität Heidelberg)

12.00 Intellectual History, FU Berlin

12.30 Global Intellectual Histories
Federico Navarrete (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

13.00 Time and Power—Periodisation in a Global Context, Part II
Chair: Andreas Eckert (Universität Zürich)

13.30 Axial Times and Epochal Breaks
Chair: Pierre Monnet (EHESS, Paris)

14.00 Popular and Pedagogical Dimensions of Periodisation
Chair: Manish Pandey (Graduate School for Global Intellectual History, Max Planck Institute for Human Development)

15.30 Coffee Break

16.00 Time and Power—Periodisation in a Global Context, Part I
Chair: Andreas Eckert (Universität Zürich)

16.30 Concluding Remarks by the Conveners and General Discussion
Chair: Andreas Eckert (Universität Zürich)

17.15 End of the Conference

Tilmann Frasch (Manchester Metropolitan University) Time, Teleology and History: “Mettyyyanism” in Theravada Buddhism
Meltem Toksoz (Bodrum Üniversitesi, Izmir) Periodisation in Late Ottoman Universal Histories, Re-Modeling Time and Empire

15.00 Concluding Roundtable

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