



Lecture Series of the Department of Development Studies

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***Brexit: a Colonial Genealogy of the
"White Working Class"***

Thursday, 22nd June 2017, 6.30 – 8.00 pm

Lecture Hall A, Uni Campus Court 2

The talk is part of the lecture series

**"Coloniality under De_Construction. Decolonial Perspectives and
Activisms"**

This lecture will provide a historical context to contemporary debates over the "white working class" as a popular force that has driven through Brexit and wider shifts in the electoral and political landscape. Specifically, the lecture will address the racialization of the distinction between deserving and underserving poor, a distinction through which the "white working class" materialises as a constituency, and to chart the consistent shifting of these racialized coordinates across imperial time and space. The lecture will argue that the "white working class" is neither an indigenous constituency, nor its own progenitor, but rather a product of struggles to consolidate and defend British imperial order which shaped the postcolonial compact of British society. Contemporary retrievals of the white working class as "deserving" of social security follow a deeply entrenched inability to consider social justice outside of the framework of race and empire. The colonial past will therefore continue to haunt post-Brexit Britain.