

Governing the Lives of Others

Global Histories of Empires: Theories and Practices

Date	14-15 September 2023
Location	Campus "Luigi Einaudi" (CLE), Lungo Dora Siena 100, Torino
Submission Deadline	28th May 2023
Abstract Length	300 words

Overview

The revitalisation of colonial and imperial studies has arguably been one of the most interesting outcomes of the rise of global and transnational historical frameworks. From new discussions about European empires in the Americas to Afro-Asian anti-colonial collaboration, it seems that scholars are more interested than ever in imperial formations, their infrastructures, and the lives of the people ruled by them (as well as the lives of those who ruled). The breadth of such topics calls for an ongoing engagement, as comparisons and discussion among experts of different geographical areas and time-frames help strengthen a more global understanding of each individual case.

The need to create more varied platforms for engagement and discussion is the main drive behind this conference organised by the participants in the Global History of Empires PhD program. We want to bring together doctoral students and early career scholars from a very diverse range of geographical areas, historical periods and methodologies. Diversity is not just an academic whim, it is a necessary step to ensure that our discussions show the complexity of theory and practices of empire without recurring to the usual worn-out tropes. A more varied base will also enable us to make better use of comparisons and highlight lesser-known case studies.

Themes

This hybrid conference aims at bringing together diverse contributions to jointly reflect on empires from theoretical and empirical perspectives. First, we are interested in addressing questions regarding what qualifies a political entity into an empire, trying to approximate a wider working definition of it. A central matter is the real or perceived “otherness” between rulers and ruled, and this constitutive difference might enter into working definitions of empire. What does government mean in different spatio-temporal frameworks? How does the constitutive difference of imperial settings play a role in supporting or resisting governmental practices?

Second, we want to integrate theoretical contributions with empirical ones. Therefore, we welcome proposals dealing with concrete case studies of practices of governance of the political, economic and social lives of empires. In this way, it will be possible to unpack theory with empirical case studies. Indeed, the role of individuals in the construction and governance of empires is central. In which ways individuals did contribute to the functioning of empires? Are they mere objects of governance or can individuals be considered as the main “agents of empire”, being the subjects which create empires with their everyday actions?

Some recommended topics:

- Imperial legacies and compensations (India and Britain/ Japan and Korea...)
- Empires, environment and capitalism.
- Empires and nation-states: the revival of supranational polities and the crisis of national sovereignty.
- Empires and human taxonomy: migration and population control.
- Gendering Empires: tracing the evolution of masculinity and femininity across imperial borders.
- Imperial formations and trans-imperial comparison: recuperate the histories of other empires beyond the West.

To apply, please email a **300 words abstract** and an academic CV to **ghempires.conf@gmail.com**. Participants would be expected to submit a working paper (max. 5000 words) around August in order to facilitate discussion. Each participant will have 20 min. for his/her presentation followed by a comment and a general discussion. Since this is a student-led initiative we recommend you apply for travel funding to your respective departments. For those who will be able to travel to Turin, accommodation in student residences and meals will be provided. We also offer the chance to present your papers and to participate online.

Abstract must be submitted by 28/05/2023