

# CALL FOR PAPERS

## Afterlives of Empire in the Public Imagination

Sapienza Università di Roma  
Rome, 21-22 September 2023

Keynote speakers: **Corinne Fowler** (University of Leicester), **Pablo Mukherjee** (University of Oxford)

The resurgence of nationalist ideologies in Europe and the US has reignited interest in the histories and legacies of modern Empires. As of late, this has been strongly visible in the UK. The role of imperial nostalgia in the debates that paved the way for Brexit has drawn the attention of historians and cultural critics to how the memories and myths of Empire informed Europe-free imaginaries. Recent historical works have fruitfully investigated the legacies and memory of Empire in the UK and the unaddressed legacies of colonial rule, such as, in Caroline Elkins's phrase, its "legac[ies] of violence".

Taking its cue from the renewed interest in imperial history, this conference will center on the memory of the new imperialism (1870-1914) and its immediate aftermath, focusing on key moments from the postwar years to the present moment. It will start from the premise that "Empire" was a cultural, institutional, and political entity that wove together colonialism, propaganda, predatory capitalism, militarism, missionary nationalism, biological racism, martial masculinity, and a heavily ideologized production of knowledge. On this assumption, the conference will investigate uses and reinventions of imperialist figures, myths, and ideas, focusing on fiction, memoirs, poetry, graphic narratives, popular history, TV series,

films, and video games, as well as on the cross-fertilization of post-imperial discourses.

We invite scholars working in modern literatures, literary studies, media studies, cultural studies, and modern history to submit proposals on topics including, but not limited to:

- The public uses of history in debates on Empire;
- Memoirs on, and memories of, Empire;
- Anti-colonial perspectives and post-imperial myths;
- Imperialism and neo-imperialism;
- Xenophobia, migrations, and imperial nostalgia;
- The persistence of "race";
- The afterlives of imperialist "classics";
- Museums and the imperial past.

Please send **abstracts of 250-300 words**, together with your contact details and affiliation, to: [imperialafterlives@gmail.com](mailto:imperialafterlives@gmail.com) by **15 March 2023**.

Presentations should be in **English** or **French** and under 20 minutes.

The conference will take place in person.



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