

Rendez-vous d'histoire coloniale, 2nd edition

Call for papers: « (Anti)colonialism and (inter)nationalism »

20-22 of June 2024 - Diplomatic Archives - Nantes.

Recent colonial and imperial historiography motivate scholars to rethink the relations between the 'metropolises' and the 'colonies'¹. Beyond the centre/periphery paradigm, often dismissed as Eurocentric, many studies have been looking at imperial systems as 'interactive units'² deployed in 'imperial webs'³. If international movements are forces able to structure imperial spaces and regimes, this requires taking into account a variety of circulations, imperial, inter-imperial, trans-imperial as well as international, so as to test the boundaries, the connections and the hierarchies of empires⁴. This stance goes against the notion of colonial 'contact'⁵ which pushes into the background the questions of imperial domination understood as the ascendancy of a minority on racially and socially inferiorized majorities, following a process of differentiation of the colonised that would justify their partial integration into a heterogeneous imperial political entity⁶.

In the wake of *Colonial studies*⁷, this conference invites scholars to put to use the tools of both critical social sciences - for a strong empirical and contextual anchorage - and those of *Postcolonial studies*, in order to bring (back) to light the multiple dimensions of imperial domination⁸.

So as not to fall into the trap of an imperial history that isolates empires as self-sufficient units, it will also pay specific attention to extra- and trans-imperial circulation. While colonisers and colonised interact, they are not isolated from the rest of the world. Indeed, imperial relations take place within

¹ À titre d'exemple de l'actualité de ces questionnements, voir Pierre Singaravélou (dir.), *Colonisations. Notre histoire*, Paris, Seuil, 2023.

² Tyler Stovall, « Universalisme, différence et invisibilité. Essai sur la notion de race dans l'histoire de la France contemporaine », *Cahiers d'histoire. Revue d'histoire critique*, n° 96-97, 2005, p. 63-90.

³ Tony Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand's Colonial Past*, Vancouver, UBC Press, 2015.

⁴ Camille Lefebvre, *Frontières de sable, frontières de papier : Histoire de territoires et de frontières, du jihad de Sokoto à la colonisation française du Niger, XIX^e-XX^e siècles*, Paris, Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2019 ; Claude Markovits, « L'Asie, une invention européenne ? », *Monde(s)*, n° 3-1, 2013, p. 53-66 ; Valentin-Yves Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1988 ; Isabelle Surun, *Dévoiler l'Afrique ? Lieux et pratiques de l'exploration (Afrique occidentale, 1780-1880)*, Paris, Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2018.

⁵ Romain Bertrand, « Histoire globale, histoires connectées : un "tournant historiographique" ? », in Alain Caillé et Stéphane Dufoix (dir.), *Le « tournant global » des sciences sociales*, Paris, La Découverte, 2013, p. 44-66 ; Jean-Paul Zúñiga, « L'Histoire impériale à l'heure de l'"histoire globale" ». Une perspective atlantique », *Revue d'histoire moderne & contemporaine*, n° 54-4bis-5, 2007, p. 54-68.

⁶ Georges Balandier, « La situation coloniale : approche théorique », *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, n° 11, 1951, p. 44-79 ; Isabelle Merle, « "La situation coloniale" chez Georges Balandier », *Monde(s)*, n° 4, vol. 2, 2013, p. 211-232 ; Frederick Cooper, « Grandeur, décadence... et nouvelle grandeur des études coloniales depuis les années 1950 », *Politix. Revue des sciences sociales du politique*, n° 66, vol. 17, 2004, p. 17-48 ; Jane Burbank et Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2011.

⁷ Emmanuelle Sibeud, « Post-Colonial et Colonial Studies : enjeux et débats », *Revue d'histoire moderne & contemporaine*, n° 51-4, vol. 5, 2004, p. 87-95.

⁸ Julian Go, *Postcolonial Thought and Social Theory*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2016.

frameworks of international relations that transcend borders and other geographical and political boundaries, whether regional, national or colonial⁹. Competitions between imperialisms have already been extensively studied in this sense¹⁰, as have the ways in which the colonised - and even colonisers¹¹ - can seize upon them to assert their interests¹². Empires are also legal elaborations that place the notion of "international" and "international relations" in tension, and are themselves akin to forms of transnational construction, since certain states are allowed to retain parcels of sovereignty within them¹³.

In line with these historiographical approaches, the aim of the conference is to explore the question of colonisation through a prism that is as global as it is localised, attentive to the overall system and its concrete expressions, without geographical restriction, for the modern and contemporary periods. It thus intends to explore the issues of domination, right down to the flesh of the actors, from a global perspective that is sensitive to interactions and contestations.

Several topics seem particularly relevant, though papers do not need to fit into those categories:

Theme 1 – Rethinking the Empire of Knowledge through the prism of internationalism(s).

This theme invites us to examine the relationship between the development of so-called colonial and imperial sciences¹⁴, and the international dynamics which, in the contemporary era, have an impact on the organisation of science. The subject of the "scientific international", i.e. the way in which international space is gradually becoming a legitimate space for the production of knowledge, has been studied through the prism of both international relations and transnational history¹⁵. Focused on Europe at the turn of the twentieth century, however, this history has not sufficiently focused on the empire, even though European powers were fully involved in colonial dynamics at that time. Furthermore, since the early 2000s, colonial sciences have been a fertile field of research in

⁹ Hélène Blais, Claire Fredj et Sylvie Thénault (dir.), « Désenclaver l'histoire de l'Algérie à la période coloniale », *Revue d'histoire moderne & contemporaine*, n° 63, vol. 2, 2016.

¹⁰ Pierre Singaravélou, « Les stratégies d'internationalisation de la question coloniale et la construction transnationale d'une science de la colonisation à la fin du XIX^e siècle », *Monde(s)*, n° 1, vol. 1, 2012, p. 135-157.

¹¹ Cécile Vidal, « Francité et situation coloniale. Nation, empire et race en Louisiane française (1699-1769) », *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, n° 64, vol. 5, 2009, p. 1019-1050.

¹² Pour un exemple récent, voir par exemple Arthur Asseraf, *Le désinformateur : Sur les traces de Messaoud Djebari, un Algérien dans le monde colonial*, Paris, Fayard, 2022.

¹³ Antoine Perrier, *Monarchies du Maghreb. L'État au Maroc et en Tunisie sous protectorat*, Paris, Éditions de l'EHESS, 2023.

¹⁴ Emmanuelle Sibeud, *Une science impériale pour l'Afrique ? La construction des savoirs africanistes en France, 1878-1930*, Paris, Éditions de l'EHESS, 2002 ; Pierre Singaravélou, « Le moment 'impérial' de l'histoire des sciences sociales (1880-1910) », *Mil neuf cent. Revue d'histoire intellectuelle*, n° 27, vol. 1, 2009, p. 87-102.

¹⁵ Christophe Charle, Jürgen Schriewer et Peter Wagner (dir.), *Transnational Intellectual Networks. Forms of Academic Knowledge and the Search for Cultural Identities*, Frankfurt, Campus, 2004 ; Elisabeth Crawford, *Nationalism and Internationalism in Science, 1880-1939: Four Studies of the Nobel Population*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002 ; Anne Rasmussen, *L'internationale scientifique 1890-1914*, Thèse de doctorat, Paris, EHESS, 1995.

colonial history¹⁶. These studies have focused on the way in which the development of geographical, historical, archaeological, legal or medical knowledge made it possible to objectify empires, but most of these works have not looked in depth at the question of international and trans-imperial circulation¹⁷. Yet *Postcolonial* and *Decolonial studies* have shown the extent to which colonisations have imposed a division of intellectual labour and dominant knowledge on a global scale over the long term¹⁸. Moreover, examining the way in which the internationalisation of science affects the production and dissemination of colonial knowledge should enable us to renew our perspectives in regards of the metropolis/colony confrontation and of the critique of Georges Basalla's diffusionist model¹⁹. Historians of science have emphasised the multipolar nature of the British Empire, organised around a number of intellectual and scientific centres²⁰. Notions of multipolarity and internationalism have thus been enriching recent work on scientific institutions set up by the colonial powers in their colonies²¹, as well as the research on scientific capitals in the colonial context²².

Following these studies, we invite proposals that highlight the interactions between the production of knowledge by colonisers and pre-existing indigenous knowledge. What happens to knowledge once it has been "colonised"²³? What were the exchanges of knowledge between empires, and did they have mutually reinforcing or rivalrous effects?

Theme 2 – Anti-imperialism et internationalism.

To adopt a focus on transnational circulations and their links with political movements opposing (post)colonialism, allows us to further understand the driving forces behind imperial domination. The inter-war period provided fertile ground for historiographical progress in this realm. The emergence of anti-imperialist international communist and pan-Africanist experiences led colonised

¹⁶ Hélène Blais, *Mirages de la carte : l'invention de l'Algérie coloniale, XIX^e-XX^e siècle*, Fayard, 2014 ; Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge : the British in India*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1996 ; Alice L. Conklin, *In the Museum of Man: Race, Anthropology, and Empire in France, 1850-1950*, Cornell, Cornell University Press, 2013 ; Alain Messaoudi, *Les arabisants et la France coloniale : savants, conseillers, médiateurs, 1780-1930*, Lyon, ENS éditions, 2015 ; Chloé Rosner, *Creuser la terre-patrie. Une histoire de l'archéologie en Palestine-Israël*, Paris, CNRS éditions, 2023.

¹⁷ Voir notamment Guillaume Lachenal, *Le médicament qui devait sauver l'Afrique : un scandale pharmaceutique aux colonies*, Paris, la Découverte, 2014 ; Deborah Neill, *Networks in Tropical Medicine: Internationalism, Colonialism, and the Rise of a Medical Specialty, 1890-1930*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2012.

¹⁸ Syed Farid Alatas, *Alternative Discourses in Asian Social Science: Responses to Eurocentrism*, New Delhi, SAGE Publications Pvt. Ltd, 2006

¹⁹ Lequel a par ailleurs déjà fait l'objet d'une remise en cause stimulante Kapil Raj, *Relocating modern science: circulation and the constitution of knowledge in South Asia and Europe, 1650-1900*, Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2007.

²⁰ Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and race: Aryanism in the British empire*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002 ; Tamson Pietsch, *Empire of Scholars : Universities, Networks and the British Academic World, 1850-1939*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2014.

²¹ Sara Legrandjacques, *Voies étudiantes. Pour une histoire globale des mobilités étudiantes en Asie (Inde britannique-Indochine française, années 1850-1940)*, Thèse de doctorat, Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2021.

²² Marie Bossaert et Margo Stemmelin, « Une nouvelle capitale pour l'orientalisme : Alger 1905 », in Marie Bossaert, Augustin Jomier et Emmanuel Szurek, *L'orientalisme en train de se faire : une enquête collective sur les études orientales dans l'Algérie coloniale*, Paris, éditions de l'EHESS (forthcoming 2024).

²³ Samir Boumediene, *La colonisation du savoir : une histoire des plantes médicinales du « Nouveau Monde », 1492-1750*, Vaulx-en-Velin, les Éditions des mondes à faire, 2016.

people to travel the world to fight against the order that oppressed them²⁴. In the aftermath of the First World War, men and women activists settled in colonial metropolises, making them the rear base for political movements in the colonies, as they did in Russia, the United States and other empires, different from the ones in which they were imperial subjects. Did these mobilities contribute to defining imperial space while challenging imperial domination? Did activists reappropriate the imperial space, or was this only a prerogative of the colonisers? To what extent did their proclaimed internationalism really lead to the establishment of connections between international communist organisms or groups and the colonies? How did men and women activists from colonising and colonised countries build political solidarity²⁵? Conversely, by provoking a reinforcement of control and surveillance, did these militant movements enable renegotiations of imperial mobilities?

Today, these past struggles can inform movements that have international elements to them: from the removal of statues to the question of colonial reparations, new militant mobilities (of actors and practices) are evident²⁶. In the light of these current events, contributions can also tackle epistemic reflections to understand what colonial empires have been and their echoes in today's world.

Theme 3 – War and peace: international institutions and colonialism :

The question of the attitude of international institutions to colonisation is a privileged entry point for a relational history of the imperial factor. These institutions - whether diplomatic conferences or summits, or actual international intergovernmental organisations - were often created to resolve military conflicts. In colonial parlance, however, the notion of pacification superseded that of war or peace, legitimising a permanent state of violence, including militarization²⁷. Indeed, while the idea of a "centenary of the conquest of Algeria" imposed the representation of a uniform and rapid conquest, this proved to be a long and bumpy process. Similarly, the "*indigénat*" instituted forms of violence in civil administration that drew on the conquest and the military administration of the colonies²⁸. Respect for human rights thus became a key issue in international interventions on the

²⁴ Voir par exemple Hakim Adi, *Pan-Africanism and Communism: The Communist International, Africa and the Diaspora, 1919-1939*, Trenton, Africa World Press, 2013 ; Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2015 ; Margaret Stevens, *Red International and Black Caribbean: Communists in New York City, Mexico and the West Indies, 1919-1939*, London, Pluto Press, 2017 ; Holger Weiss, *International Communism and Transnational Solidarity: Radical Networks, Mass Movements and Global Politics, 1919-1939*, Leyde, Brill, 2016.

²⁵ Pascale Barthélémy, *Sororité et colonialisme. Françaises et Africaines au temps de la guerre froide, 1944-1962*, Paris, Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2022.

²⁶ Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *From #Blacklivesmatter to Black Liberation*, Chicago, Haymarket Books, 2016 ; Pierre Tévanian, *Politiques de la mémoire*, Paris, Amsterdam, 2021. Voir aussi Sarah Gensburger et Jenny Wüstenberg, *Dé-commémoration : Quand le monde déboulonne des statues et renomme des rues*, Paris, Fayard, 2023.

²⁷ Jean-François Klein, « La pacification : un legs impérial hybride par-delà les décolonisations », *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, n° 287, vol. 3, 2022, p. 9-22.

²⁸ Didier Guignard, *L'abus de pouvoir dans l'Algérie coloniale (1880-1914) : visibilité et singularité*, Nanterre, Presses universitaires de Paris Ouest, 2014 ; Gregory Mann, « What Was the "Indigénat"? The "Empire of Law" in French West Africa », *The Journal of African History*, n° 50, vol. 3, 2009, p. 331-353.

colonial question, mobilising experts and expertise²⁹. As a result, international institutions were taking decisions on many aspects of the colonial situation, from geopolitical questions concerning borders and resources, to social issues such as the environment³⁰, food³¹, labour³², health³³ and education³⁴.

The contributions can thus address several questions: can international institutions really compete with imperial institutions, or are they merely new ruses of imperial reason³⁵? Can colonised women and men get a hold of, and a say in, those spaces, or are they doomed to fail? Can relations between colonisers and the colonised be restructured within these spaces?

Theme 4 – Nationalisation of societies and the colonial situation:

Colonialism was the context for the affirmation of national mobilizations among the colonised. In contrast to the imposition of sovereignty by the colonial metropolises, resistance was framed on international bases: Pan-Africanism³⁶ or Pan-Asianism³⁷, in reference to Africanity or Asianity, Pan-Islamism³⁸ in reference to the Ummah, Negritude³⁹ through racial self-identification, were all communities imagined⁴⁰ to counter imperialism. The rise of colonised nationalisms also responded to this logic⁴¹. As for the colonisers themselves, their expression of nationalism followed different logics, depending on their social and political positions. The *francité* claimed by Louisiana colonialists in the second half of the 18th century⁴² had nothing to do with the "greater France" claimed by the Minister of Colonies at the 1931 Colonial Exhibition⁴³. Other situations, such as the

²⁹ Philippe Bourmaud, Norig Neveu et Chantal Verdeil (dir.), *Experts et expertise dans les mandats de la société des nations : figures, champs, outils*, Paris, Presses de l'Inalco, 2020 ; Emmanuelle Sibeud, Hélène Blais et Claire Fredj (dir.), « Sociétés coloniales : enquêtes et expertises », *Monde(s)*, 2013, n° 4, vol. 2.

³⁰ Guillaume Blanc, *L'invention du colonialisme vert. Pour en finir avec le mythe de l'Éden africain*, Paris, Flammarion, 2020.

³¹ Vincent Bonnacase, *La pauvreté au Sahel. Du savoir colonial à la mesure internationale*, Paris, Karthala, 2011.

³² Frederick Cooper, *Décolonisation et travail en Afrique, l'Afrique britannique et française, 1935-1960*, Paris, Karthala-Sephis, 2004.

³³ Jessica Pearson-Patel, « Promoting Health, Protecting Empire: Inter-Colonial Medical Cooperation in Postwar Africa », *Monde(s)*, n° 7, vol. 1, 2015, p. 213-230.

³⁴ Lydia Hadj-Ahmed, *L'école malgré la guerre, l'école grâce à la guerre ? : des enfants et des familles algériennes à l'épreuve de la guerre d'indépendance algérienne (1954-1962)*, Thèse d'histoire, Université Paris Nanterre, 2022 ; Damiano Matasci, Miguel Bandeira Jeronimo et Hugo Gonçalves Dores (dir.), *Repenser la « mission civilisatrice » : L'éducation dans le monde colonial et postcolonial au XX^e siècle*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2020.

³⁵ Naïma Maggetti, « La Grande-Bretagne à l'ONU dans les années 1940 et 1950 : sa défense d'un colonialisme "libéral et éclairé" », *Relations internationales*, n° 177, 2019, p. 31-44.

³⁶ Hakim Adi, *Histoire du Panafricanisme*, Paris, Présence Africaine, 2022.

³⁷ Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2007.

³⁸ Pierre-Jean Luizard, *Le choc colonial et l'islam*, Paris, La Découverte, 2006.

³⁹ Gary Wilder, *Freedoms Time. Negritude, decolonization, and the future of the world*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2015.

⁴⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso, 1991.

⁴¹ Jennifer Anne Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis: The Urban Grounds of Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Interwar Paris*, Lincoln and London, University of Nebraska Press, 2010 ; Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2015.

⁴² Cécile Vidal, « Francité et situation coloniale. Nation, empire et race en Louisiane française (1699-1769) », *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, n° 64, vol. 5, 2009, p. 1019-1050.

⁴³ Herman Lebovics, *True France: The Wars Over Cultural Identity, 1900-1945*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1992.

Algerian identity of *pieds-noirs*⁴⁴ or the American identity of colonisers⁴⁵, lead to identification not with the imperial nation but with the colonised land. Naturalizations and denaturalizations⁴⁶ were tools for legitimising and maintaining the colonial order, but also paradoxical levers for partially overcoming domination through access to citizenship. In this latter area, contributions will examine the conditions under which these colonial feelings of belonging emerged, for instance, by analysing the media that produced and circulated them. Contributions could also address how independences changed the perceptions of belonging?

To submit your proposals, send your abstract to grocolloque@gmail.com before the 1st of February 2024. Abstracts should be of a maximum of 300 words, and they need to include a brief bio. The organisers of the event will not cover travel and accommodation expenses. The event will take place in person, no virtual participation is foreseen.

Scientific and organising committee :

Élise Abassade ; Étienne Arnould ; Nadia Biskri ; Vincent Bollenot ; Marie Challet ; Fabienne Chamelot ; Nora Eguienta ; Edith Ekodo ; Luca Nelson-Gabin ; Margot Garcin ; Quentin Gasteuil ; Thaïs Gendry ; Thierry Guillopé ; Mickael Langlois ; Éric Lechevallier ; Hugo Mulonnière ; Anna Nasser ; Adrien Nery ; Martino Oppizzi ; Maëlle Pennéguès ; Antonin Plarier ; Christelle Rabier ; Chloé Rosner ; Margo Stemmelin.

⁴⁴ Yann Scioldo-Zürcher, *Devenir métropolitain : politique d'intégration et parcours de rapatriés d'Algérie en métropole (1954-2005)*, Paris, Éditions de l'EHESS, 2010.

⁴⁵ Frédéric Spillemaeker, « La Révolution caribéenne : une époque pour comprendre et interpréter un espace colonial en révolution », *Tracés. Revue de Sciences humaines*, n° 36, 2019, p. 117-138.

⁴⁶ Yerri Urban, *L'indigène dans le droit colonial français 1865-1955*, Paris, Fondation Varenne, 2011 ; Laure Blévis et Claire Zalc, « Les dénaturalisations dans les colonies », in Annie Poinot et Thomas Lebé (dir.), *Connaitre les dénaturalisés de Vichy : La base Dénat, un nouvel outil et ses exploitations*, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, Publications des Archives nationales, 2019 [en ligne].