

## **CFP: 'Livestock as Global and Imperial Commodities: Economies, Ecologies and Knowledge Regimes, c. 1500 - present' Berlin, 14-15 July 2022**

Announcement published by Helen Cowie on Monday, December 6, 2021

Type:

Workshop

Date:

July 14, 2022 to July 15, 2022

Location:

Germany

Subject Fields:

Animal Studies, Colonial and Post-Colonial History / Studies, Economic History / Studies, Environmental History / Studies, History of Science, Medicine, and Technology

Call for Papers: Livestock as Global and Imperial Commodities: Economies, Ecologies and Knowledge Regimes, c. 1500 - present.

Commodities of Empire International Workshop, Free University Berlin, 14-15 July 2022

Livestock has played a crucial role in imperial politics, economies and societies over the past centuries. The expansion of animal raising often went hand in hand with settler colonialist land expropriation, and various animals were in many places crucial to colonial conquest and exploitation. Moreover, livestock and livestock commodities, such as meat, wool, hides and tallow were traded and consumed within and across boundaries, both imperial and non-imperial. Such commodification processes not only relied on settler livestock frontiers, but also on the transformation of indigenous livestock economies, knowledge regimes and local ecologies. They were closely tied to the global expansion of capitalism and, as such, also affected non-colonial and post-imperial spaces across the world in many similar, yet sometimes also diverging ways. However, compared to agricultural cash crops and minerals, imperial and global histories of livestock are still quite rare. This workshop addresses this important research gap. It aims to explore the different (political, economic, societal, cultural, religious, ecological and scientific) dimensions of livestock production and commodification in global and imperial history.

We broadly define livestock as domesticated animals that are raised for multiple purposes, most notably for their labour (draft, pack, riding and powering machinery); their skin, hair, horns, shells, feathers, etc. (for clothing or ornaments); their meat, milk and eggs (for nutritional purposes); their manure (as fertilizer or fuel); their body parts (for medicinal purposes); their monetary value (for barter, savings and marriage payments); or their symbolic value (for religious uses, punishments and displays of prestige). Our definition includes cattle, water buffaloes, yaks, reindeer, sheep, goats, pigs, camels, elephants, horses, mules, donkeys, llamas, alpacas, poultry and ostriches, and we would also welcome papers on (shell)fish farming. Yet, we would exclude wild animals that are hunted, exhibited and/or subjected to conservationist measures. These will be addressed in a second workshop in 2023.

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Potential paper topics may relate to:

- the politics of livestock production: colonial control over land and/or pastoralist societies, local/imperial food security, capitalist expansion, international organisations such as FAO, etc.
- modes of livestock raising: nomadic, semi-nomadic and settled pastoralism and mixed farming, large-scale ranching, industrial animal farming, ownership by international corporations, etc.
- social conditions and effects of livestock production: social stratification, gender, race, caste, religious, and ethnic roles, changing labour forms and relations, (legal) regimes of land and livestock ownership, etc.
- environmental consequences: deforestation, formation of grasslands, soil erosion, (water) pollution, global warming through methane emissions, etc.
- veterinary, agricultural and environmental knowledge and technologies: (non-)circulation of knowledge, conflicting knowledge regimes and actors, scientific institutions and practices such as experimental stations, cross-breeding and selective breeding techniques, practices of disease control, etc.
- processing of livestock commodities: slaughterhouses, processing of hides, wool and dairy, techniques for dried, salted, canned, frozen and chilled meat, etc.
- trading infrastructures and networks: transport technologies, ports, trade companies, credit mechanisms, etc.
- livestock labour: transport, warfare, role in agriculture, forestry and mining for the production of other (global) commodities such as sugar, teak or silver, etc.
- local, imperial and global uses of livestock commodities: for food, clothing, fertilizer, medicine, payments, etc.

We are interested in cases from all geographical regions and in approaches from various disciplines. In addition to historians, we welcome papers from anthropologists, sociologists, veterinary scientists, zoologists, environmentalists and other scholars working on the global and imperial history of livestock and livestock commodities.

This two-day workshop is a collaborative venture between the Commodities of Empire British Academy Research Project and the Commodifying Cattle Research Project funded by the German Research Foundation at the Free University Berlin. Following the long-standing practice of Commodities of Empire workshops, papers will be grouped in thematic panels, pre-circulated to all workshop participants, and panel discussions will be opened by a chair or discussant. Paper-givers will then have the possibility to reply succinctly, and this will be followed by open discussion. Papers presented at the workshop may be considered for publication in the Commodities of Empire Working Papers series: <https://commoditiesofempire.org.uk/publications/working-papers/>

. We strongly encourage graduate students and other early career scholars to propose papers.

Costs of accommodation in and, within certain limits, travel to Berlin will be covered. We have special funding for scholars coming from the Global South. Please note, however, that while we aim to hold the workshop on site at the Free University Berlin, we might have to hold the workshop virtually, or in a hybrid form, depending on the evolution of the Covid-19 pandemic and the (travel) restrictions it entails.

Please e-mail expressions of interest, with a title and an abstract of no more than 300 words, by 31 January 2022 to Samuël Coghe, Free University Berlin, [samuel.coghe@fu-berlin.de](mailto:samuel.coghe@fu-berlin.de). We will notify authors about the acceptance of their papers by 15 March 2022. They will then be asked to submit a draft paper of approx. 5,000-6,000 words (not counting footnotes and bibliography) 3 weeks prior to the event.

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<https://commoditiesofempire.org.uk/events/workshop-2022/>