

Call for Papers

Summer School

Archives of Colonial Dis/Possession: Centering Non-European Perspectives on Wealth (15th-18th Centuries)

Sevilla, Sept. 30–Oct. 4, 2024
Organized by Romana Radlwimmer
Funded by VW-Foundation

Thematic Scope

Colonial wealth, generated by well-remunerated, slave, and also slave labor, was a major factor of early modern societal transformations, affecting literary and cultural developments, global economies, and trade relations, exploiting or boosting regions, and shaping power formations and imperial clashes (Lane 2019, Voigt 2016, Pieper 2014, Money 2004). *Archives of Colonial Dis/Possession: Centering Non-European Perspectives on Wealth (15th-18th Centuries)* traces marginalized, displaced, and racialized agencies and knowledges on imperial fortune and regards them through the lens of the archive. The Interdisciplinary Summer School investigates the dynamics of owning, not owning and disowning, of control and subversion, which accompanied the generation of colonial wealth, and the literary and cultural relations tied to it.

“Possession”, on one hand – an early modern forensic term commonly employed for overseas’ riches – was used by Bartolomé de las Casas to defend American societies’ actual and legal access to wealth, or by Bernal Díaz del Castillo to vindicate the right to leave his Encomienda to his heirs (Adorno 2007). The imperial usurpation of wealth, on the other, later led to the attempt to retrieve the archives formed by “colonial dispossession”; this ambiguously coincided with the perceived “impossibility of recovery” in archives which obscure or exclude certain subjects (Reid-Pharr 2016, Helton 2015, Walters 2013).

The archive, as form of assembly and access to the past (Derrida 1995, Foucault 1969), encompasses alternative literacies and modes of storage during Romance expansionism, offering a variety of methods to document undocumented intellectual contributions of Indigenous, African, and Asian metalworking communities (Bigelow 2020, Burns 2010). Situated in Seville, this Summer School imparts academic lectures, interactive workshops and theory panels. It explores the city’s historic spaces of colonial dis/possession and visits the Archivo de Indias.

Confirmed Keynotes and Academic Instructors

Allison Bigelow (University of Virginia), Tom Scully Discovery Chair Associate Professor, Department of Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and Program in Latin American Studies. Affiliate faculty of the Department of Women, Gender, Sexuality and of the Equity Center, UVA’s hub for community-engaged research of historic inequities. Author of 30 [articles](#) on colonial science, race, gender, and Indigenous history. In 2021 and 2022, her book, [Mining Language: Indigenous Knowledge, Racial Thinking, and Colonial Metallurgy in the Early Modern Iberian World](#) (UNC 2020) received awards from the History of Science Society, American Historical Association, Conference on Latin American History, and the MLA.

Renate Pieper (University of Graz), Chair of Economic and Social History (1998-2022). Her research interests focus on the economic and cultural history of the Spanish Empire and its European connections in early modern times. Latest publications: [Mining, Money and Markets in the Early Modern Atlantic. Digital Approaches and New Perspective](#) (co-ed. with Claudia de Lozanne Jefferies, Markus Denzel, Palgrave 2019); [Geschichte Lateinamerikas seit dem 15. Jahrhundert](#) (Mandelbaum 2023). She is member of the Academia Europaea.

Lisa Voigt (Yale University), Professor of Spanish and Portuguese. Author of *Spectacular Wealth. The Festivals of Colonial South American Mining Towns* (UTP 2016) and *Writing Captivity in the Early Modern Atlantic* (UNCP 2009, MLA Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize), and of numerous articles in the field, such as ["The Archive and the Festival"](#) (2019). Through her involvement in the Portuguese-funded project [RITUALS](#), she is contributing to and editing a special issue and a collected volume on Public Rituals in the Portuguese Empire. She is also Special Issues Editor of *Colonial Latin American Review*.

Venue

The Summer School takes place in Seville, Spain, from September 30 to October 4, 2024.

Language

Archives of Colonial Dis/Possession is held primarily in English, and partly in Spanish; a solid command of English is crucial, ideally of Spanish and/or Portuguese.

Costs

The Summer School is funded by the Volkswagen Foundation. Successful applicants (PhD Students/Postdoctoral Researchers/Master Students) may receive substantial coverage of their travel and accommodation costs.

Application Process

Archives of Colonial Dis/Possession is aimed towards Doctoral Students (or Postdoctoral Researchers/Master Students) in the Humanities and Social Sciences, such as Literature, Culture, History, Ethnology, Economy, Archaeology, Archival Studies or other, adjacent fields. It is also open to more seasoned researchers, to artists and community members. Following their presentation during the Summer School, the participants will be invited to publish their research in a high-impact academic publication. For PhD Students (Postdoctoral Researchers/Master Students), there will be online preparations concerning the Summer School and the publication process.

The application for PhD Students (Postdoctoral Researchers/Master Students) should contain the following documents:

- Motivation letter
- Short Curriculum Vitae (incl. publications, if applicable)
- Abstract of planned presentation during Summer School (= also prospective article for high-impact publication), about 400 words.

Application for other participants:

- Short Curriculum Vitae (incl. publications, if applicable)
- Abstract of planned presentation during Summer School, about 400 words

Please direct any questions, and send your application in one PDF file until **April 26, 2024**, to Prof. Dr. Romana Radlwimmer (radlwimmer@em.uni-frankfurt.de).

Bibliography

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- Bigelow, Allison (2020). *Mining Language. Racial Thinking, Indigenous Knowledge, and Colonial Metallurgy in the Early Modern Colonial World*. University of North Carolina Press.
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- Derrida, Jacques (1995). *Mal d'Archive: Une Impression Freudienne*. Galilée.
- Foucault, Michel (1969). *L'Archéologie du savoir*. Gallimard.
- Helton, Laura et al. (2015). "The Question of Recovery: An Introduction." *Social Text* XXXIII: 1-18.
- Lane, Kris (2019). *Potosí: The Silver City That Changed the World*. University of California Press.
- Money, Mary (2004). *Oro y plata en Los Andes: Significado en los diccionarios de Aymara y Quechua, Siglos XVI-XVII*. Colegio Nacional de Historiadores.
- Pieper, Renate (2014). "Las repercusiones de los metales preciosos americanos en Europa, siglos XVI y XVIII." *Oro y plata en los inicios de la economía global: de las minas a la moneda*, ed. Bernd Hausberger, Antonio Ibarra. Colegio de México. 273-297.
- Reid-Pharr, Robert F. (2016). *Archives of Flesh: African America, Spain, and Post-Humanist Critique*. New York University Press.
- Voigt, Lisa (2016). *Spectacular Wealth. The Festivals of Colonial South American Mining Towns*. University of Texas Press.
- Walters, Wendy W. (2013). *Archives of the Black Atlantic. Reading Between Literature and History*. Routledge.