**Call for Papers: International Conference to be held at the University of Delhi, Delhi, December 3-5, 2017**

**Empires: Towards a Global History**

Empires have had an enduring influence on global history. They have functioned as major geopolitical units and as preeminent arenas for the circulation of ideas, techniques, goods and people. However we may describe or define empires, diversity and heterogeneity remain crucial features, in terms of political formations as well as relationships (tributaries, settler colonies, chieftainships, for example); and because they straddled varieties of economic structures (agrarian, pastoral, trading, urban and rural), ethnicities and populations. Precisely because of their heterogeneity, empires have facilitated connections, circulation, and commerce within and across their boundaries. Empires often endured beyond and across different ages, competing and coexisting with rival empires. They were forged and dissolved by forces that were both internal and external to their presumed territorial boundaries.

Empires exerted their influence within and beyond their formally recognized territory. With the rise of the capitalist world system, empires had to contend not only with other empires and imperialisms but also with the emerging nation states and nationalisms, which very often rose from the very womb of the empires themselves. Did they also promote a plurality of cultures even as they were dominated by an imperial center with its own style and ethos?

Even when empires seem to have vanished as legally recognizable entities, their influence can be seen in the way the concept has been extended to include trading empires, religious empires, commodity specific empires and so forth. Since they rested on justifying ideologies,Empires were discursive as well as economic and political formations. Crucial though to their management of diversity was the need to accommodate or promote a plurality of cultures even as they were dominated by an imperial center with its own style and ethos.

The proposed conference is premised on the idea that empires drew their strength from a global systemic architecture of hegemony and dominance. The objective of the conference is designed to emphasize how imperial interactions served to reinforce empires within their global scaffolding. “Towards a Global History of Empires” seeks to delineate different strands and interconnected themes that explain both empires’ persistence as well as their mutations over time.

The themes that we propose for the conference shall include:

* Political construction of empires and their dissolution
* Circulation within and between empires of ideas, techniques, institutions
* Circulation of goods and trade links between empires
* Movement of people within and between empires
* Empires as discursive formations
* Plural cultures and imperial centers
* Micro history and empire

We invite papers addressing the above themes from all periods of history. We are looking for work that looks at empire from a global history approach that emphasizes connections and encourages comparisons. Advanced research students as well as senior scholars are invited to apply for the conference.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

* Please submit a single combined doc or pdf file including an abstract of no more than 500 words, along with a brief CV and mail it by electronic mail to [*wigh@fas.harvard.edu*](mailto:wigh@fas.harvard.edu) with the subject line “Empire2017” by **July 1, 2017.**
* Scholars chosen to participate in the conference will have to submit the final version of their paper (of not more than 7000 words) no later than November 1, 2017.
* In the body of the email, please include your name, affiliation, and the title of your project.
* We recommend including a header with your name on every page of your submission.
* In the case of papers with multiple contributors, we are only able to cover transportation costs for one person.

We are particularly interested in and encourage applications from the Global South.

We will inform applicants by August 15, 2017 if they will be invited to Delhi. We will be able to support the travel of invited participants.

# *The Conference is funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and the Department of History( UGC- Centre of Advanced Studies), University of Delhi, Delhi and is part of a series of academic initiatives of the Global History Network, a network of global history institutions including East China Normal University, Shanghai; the International Institute of Social History, the Netherlands; Lab Mundi at University of Sao Paulo, Brazil; Department of History, University of Delhi,the Weatherhead Initiative on Global History, Harvard University, USA, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, Senegal, and the University of Göttingen, Germany.*

Coordination:

Department of History, University of Delhi

Weatherhead Initiative on Global History, Harvard University

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