



Colonial Objects: The Material Culture of Italian Colonialism

International Conference: 4 - 5 December 2025
Villino Stroganoff, Via Gregoriana 22, 00187 Rome and online



Scientific Organization:

Carmen Belmonte (Università di Padova; Bibliotheca Hertziana - MPI), Nicola Camilleri (Maynooth University; Università Roma Tre), Bianca Gaudenzi (Università di Firenze; Wolfson College, University of Cambridge), Laura Moure Cecchini (Università di Padova)

Thursday, 4 December, 2025 - Bibliotheca Hertziana
Via Gregoriana 22, Rome

09.00 - 09:30 **Welcome opening remarks by** Carmen Belmonte, Laura Moure Cecchini, Nicola Camilleri and Bianca Gaudenzi

09:30 - 13.00 **Panel I: Propaganda and its Legacies**

Chair: Tristan Weddigen (Bibliotheca Hertziana - Istituto Max Planck per la Storia dell'arte)

Agnese Ghezzi (Libera Università di Bolzano)

Bound Memories: Colonial Propaganda and the Material Life of a Photographic Album

Sara Vitacca (Université Marie et Louis Pasteur, Centre Lucien Febvre, Besançon)

Metallic Propaganda: The Medagliere Libico and the Role of Medals in Forging Italian Colonial Narratives

11:00 - 11:30: Coffee break

Chair: Raffaele Bedarida (Sapienza, Università di Roma)

Paolo Novak (School for Oriental and African Studies, University of London)

Everyday coloniality and migration in a central Italian province

Livia Dubon Bohlig (Kingston University London)

Colonial Photography as Sensorial Object: Embodied Listening and the Adwa Case Study

13:00 - 14:00: LUNCH (only for speakers and chairs)

14.00 - 16:15 **Panel II: The Empire at Home**

Chair: Petra Terhoeven (Istituto Storico Germanico di Roma)

Victoria Witkowski (University of Southern Denmark, Odense)

Playing Empire: Fascist-era Board Games and their Postcolonial Echoes

Chiara Rubessi (ISIA Design Firenze; ISIA Design Roma)

Gli arredi di Carlo Bugatti come agenti di significato nel contesto coloniale italiano

Tommaso Mammini (Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona)

A Colonial Whip between Personal Memory and Fascist Ideology

16.15 - 16.45: Coffee break

16:45 - 19:00 **Panel III: Colonial nature**

Chair: Lorenzo Benadusi (Università Roma Tre)

Tairan An (gta Institute, ETH Zurich)

Anatomy of a Skin: Logistics, the Lodge, and Italian Colonial Ornithology

Tiziana N. Beltrame & Luca Tonetti (Università di Padova)
Storie di carta: buste e campioni di un botanico in missione in Tripolitania

Virginia Magnaghi (Bibliotheca Hertziana - Istituto Max Planck per la Storia dell'arte)
The Uegit Meteorite: Towards a Material History of the Italian Colonial Landscape through a Celestial Body

Friday, 5 December, 2025- Bibliotheca Hertziana
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9.00 - 12:30 **Panel IV: Spoliation and Restitution**

Chair: Uoldelul Chelati Dirar (Università di Macerata)

Lorenzo Declich (ISMEO, Roma)
Metaoggetti coloniali: inventari e liste del Museo coloniale di Roma

Thomas Demewez (Addis Ababa University)
Tracing the Trajectories of Ethiopian Material Culture linked to Italian Colonialism: Ras Desta Damtew Attires in Italian Collections in Focus

10.30 - 11.00: Coffee break

Chair: Laura Iamurri (Università Roma Tre)

Silvia Iannelli (Università di Padova e Università Ca' Foscari Venezia)
The Wakka of the Konso People of Southern Ethiopia: From Spoliation to Re-Signification

Giulia Beatrice (Bibliotheca Hertziana - Istituto Max Planck per la Storia dell'arte)
Tsehai's Flight. Looting, Memory, and the Making of Colonial "Aeroculture"

12:30 - 13:30: LUNCH (only for speakers and chairs)

13:30 - 17:00 **Panel V: The Empire in the Museum**

Chair: Gaia Delpino (Museo delle Civiltà, Roma)

Antonella Gioli (Università di Pisa)
Una bandiera etiope e altri oggetti da Addis Abeba a Livorno: manufatti, musealizzazione e cultura visiva

Marco Foravalle (Scuola IMT Alti Studi, Lucca)
Exhibiting Colonial Subjugation: The Tricolour Shield of Dejaz Hapte Mikael in the Royal Armoury of Turin

15:00 - 15:15: Coffee break

Chair: Rosa Anna Di Lella (Museo delle Civiltà, Roma)

Matilde Vernuccio (Università di Torino)

Il lämd di däğğazmač Habtä Mika'el. Interpretazioni conflittuali sulla provenienza di un manto etiopico

Davide Zendri (MITAG - Museo Storico italiano della Guerra, Rovereto)

Dono, negoziazione, sottrazione, rappresentazione: Il Revolver a cinque canne sistema Pepperbox, Cirenaica, Libia, metà sec. XIX

Final discussion

Online participation will be possible through the Vimeo channel.

Links will be published here soon <https://www.biblhertz.it/events/43901/2643800>

The conference is organized as part of the research unit [Decolonizing Italian Visual and Material Culture](#) of the Department Weddigen at the Bibliotheca Hertziana - Max Planck Institute for Art History, in collaboration with the Contemporary History section of the German Historical Institute in Rome.

A joint event will take place on March 26th 2026 at the Italian Academy, Columbia University, New York with the generous support of the Ragusa Foundation for the Humanities.