

Co-dependent Empires

2nd Annual Conference of Imperial Entanglements: Trans-Oceanic Networks in British and Spanish Colonialism and their Legacy

13-14 July 2018, Museo Histórico de Acapulco 'Fuerte de San Diego', Acapulco,
Mexico

Conference Theme: The historiography on empires and imperial rivalries is abundant. The stories of the rise and fall of Rome, Carthage, Persia, Byzantium, Portugal, Spain, France, Britain, etc., are all well worn territory for a variety of historians. Empires have been compared and their roles in the emergence and demise of others examined. Scholarship that covers the entire span of one or more empires tends to run along two methodological tracks: a general comparative study or a study of rivalry with one empire emerging victorious over another. This conference seeks to introduce a new framework for studying the relations between empires (specifically Britain and Spain): 'Co-dependent empires'. The idea of co-dependency serves as a way to conceptualize Anglo-Spanish relations and to explain the research coming out of the Imperial Entanglements project. At the core of a co-dependent relationship between empires is the idea that, to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the period, neither one could function without the other. While neither empire would officially admit to this, negotiations and interactions in the colonies bolstered continued co-dependency rather than seeking a solution that left one empire as the 'winner'. Neither empire ever found a way to exist in the colonial space without depending, in some way, on the other.

Conference Aims: We aim to bring together an international group of scholars to explore diverse aspects of Anglo-Spanish imperial interactions from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives, framed (but not restricted) by the concept of co-dependency, its benefits and limitations. It is hoped that this will allow scholars to present their research with minimal constraint but through the lens of co-dependent empires. In this way, we hope to foment discussion between scholars from different fields and working on different periods, but for whom the concept of imperial entanglement or co-dependency can provide a point of contact. How useful is it? What can it mean in different contexts? How might it be nuanced, extended or challenged?

A secondary aim of the conference, and the reason it is hosted at Fuerte de San Diego in Acapulco, is to bring together scholars from Europe and Latin America in a setting that, while often dismissed as merely a centre of the Mexican tourist industry, is one of the most important crossroads of empire. It was through Acapulco that Potosí silver, Chinese and East India goods, British goods, Chinese coolies, varied religious ideas, food recipes, etc., all flowed (in both directions). The museum at Fuerte San Diego is, unfortunately, little known though it is a world class museum. It is hoped that this conference will help the museum raise its profile and that of Acapulco as a place that is vital to the history of empires and a place where scholarly work is still actively taking place.

Paper Proposals

We invite proposals for individual papers on all aspects of Anglo-Spanish relations, encounters, conflicts, and entanglements from the early modern period through the nineteenth century that engage with the conference theme. Some of the topics we particularly wish to include are:

- Slavery
- The effect of entangled histories on the development of national cuisines
- The flow of news/information/literature across empires
- History of art and architecture
- History of war
- History of music

Abstracts of about 300-500 words and a CV should be sent to Dr. Anna Brinkman by 20 April 2018. Please send your abstract and CV to: a.brinkman@warwick.ac.uk

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/modernlanguages/research/imperialentanglements/>