

Colonial Objects: Material Culture of Italian Colonialism (Rome, 4–5 Dec 25)

Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History, Villino Stroganoff, Via
Via Gregoriana 22, 00187 Roma / online, 04.–05.12.2025

Carmen Belmonte

Scientific organization:

Carmen Belmonte (Università di Padova; Bibliotheca Hertziana – MPI),

Laura Moure Cecchini (Università di Padova),

Nicola Camilleri (Maynooth University; Università Roma Tre),

Bianca Gaudenzi (Università di Firenze; Wolfson College, University of Cambridge).

Thursday 4 December 2025

09.00 – 09:30 Welcome & opening remarks

Carmen Belmonte (Università di Padova)

Laura Moure Cecchini (Università di Padova)

Nicola Camilleri (Maynooth University; Università Roma Tre)

Bianca Gaudenzi (Università di Firenze; Wolfson College, University of Cambridge)

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 (SOAS, 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

9.00 – 12:30 Panel IV: Spoliation and Restitution

Chair: Uoldelul Chelati Dirar (Università di Macerata)

Lorenzo Declich (ISMEQ, 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 Altì 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 däğgazmač Habtä Mikael. 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 secolo.

Final discussion

Participation online will be possible through the Vimeo channel.

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

The conference is organized as part of the research unit Decolonizing Italian Visual and Material Culture (<https://www.biblhertz.it/3230527/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.

Quellennachweis:

CONF: Colonial Objects: Material Culture of Italian Colonialism (Rome, 4-5 Dec 25). In: ArtHist.net, 26.11.2025. Letzter Zugriff 10.01.2026. <<https://arthist.net/archive/51232>>.