



International Commission
for Research into
European Food History

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ICREFH NEWSLETTER

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The International Commission for Research into European Food History was founded at Münster in 1989. ICREFH is a group of scholars working on the history of food and nutrition in Europe since the late eighteenth century. Every two years ICREFH holds a symposium on a single theme and publishes the proceedings. The official language is English, with French and German as working languages. Every two years ICREFH has held a symposium on a single theme in a number of European centres. More significantly, ICREFH has an unmatched record of disseminating its findings by publishing most of the papers presented at its

symposia in book form. To date, there are fifteen volumes published in English, all by commercial publishers. This has made ICREFH unique in terms of its strength and originality as a research seminar committed to the publication of its findings. Its biennial meetings are symposia involving the active participation by members of the network who feel able to contribute their research findings on the chosen theme of the symposium.

ICREFH's website

Please visit <https://icrefh.hypotheses.org/>

President's message

Dear all,
Regular readers of the ICREFH Newsletter will recall that the symposium planned for Ekaterinaburg in September 2023 was cancelled soon after Russia invaded Ukraine. Since then we have been working to secure an alternative venue and we are very grateful to Ilaria Berti, who has stepped in with an offer of Seville, Spain, in October 4th-6th 2023. This means that we can keep to our regular biennial schedule and I am pleased to say that we already have an offer for a symposium in September 2025.

Please find attached the Seville Call for Papers and an application form which has to be submitted by the end of November this year.

Sylvie Vabre, August 2022

International Commission for Research
into European Food History
Call for Papers

EUROPEAN EMPIRES ON A PLATE (c. 1750-today)

October 4th-6th 2023, Seville.
Deadline for application: November 30th,
2022

The expansion and decline of empires constitute some of the most remarkable historical processes from the 1750s to today, an epoch marked by a series of significant global changes related to food and empires.

EUROPEAN EMPIRE ON A PLATE (c. 1750-today) aims at examining unequal, multifaceted and complex colonial encounters and exchanges through food. These interchanges not only affected the power of any particular empire, but they also led to transformations in the quantity and quality of the foodstuffs consumed in both the metropolises and the colonies. By adopting an extensive concept of 'empire', we include the formal and informal ones as well as the overseas and the continental empires. In a nutshell, this concept covers powers that established control over foreign territories.

The relationship between food and empire has been the subject of renowned studies such as the ones related with the Columbian Exchange (Earle 2012; Saldarriaga 2011; LaCombe's 2011). However, even though the Columbian Exchange proved to be the major food encounter, historians have examined the relationship between food and empires in other contexts. Among them are Erika Rappaport and her focus on the British empire and tea from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries (2017); Troy Bickham and his work on how British eighteenth-century citizens consumed imperial commodities (2020) that should be compared and contrasted with how France acted with 'its' colonial food (Lauren Janes 2016); and Cecilia Leong-Salobir on the role of local servants in inventing and promoting the Asian fusion cuisine between c. 1850 and 1960 within the context of the British empire (2011). All of these works have shown how food in the imperial space is a useful lens to evaluate a series of otherwise hidden global processes such as resistance, acceptance, negotiation, and hybridity.

Even though all of the above-mentioned aspects have already been elaborated rather well, EUROPEAN EMPIRES ON A PLATE plans to further develop the subject with the aim of providing fresh interpretations, highlighting the late 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

The relationship between food and empires from the eighteenth to the twenty-century can be seen in various ways for their interdependence with numerous aspects of cultural, social, political, and economic life, not underestimating the comparative approach within countries or within regions in the same country, or the gender perspective. It is also important to appreciate the relationship between foodways and empires from a non-western point of view as well as from a gender perspective. Therefore, a proposal must concern Europe, but it may also be related to the colonies.

The following research areas are suggested, but the organizing committee is open to other proposals:

Food, empire and its economic aspects:

- Construction of commercial and distribution networks of ‘colonial products’; the role of individual companies; the possible support of government institutions; from scarcity to ubiquitousness of exotic foods and flavours.
- Immigrant restaurant entrepreneurs: from economic growth to racial tensions (these spaces are multifarious sites in which the consumers are able to retrieve exotic foodstuff allowing the circulation of products; they

are often seen as a space for gathering and used as a way to maintain connections with the culture of origin of the owners and employees).

- Agricultural sector and animal breeding. How the introduction and spread of new cultivars and animals helped to provide greater diversity to diets and new staple foods in either Europe or the colonies.

Food, empire and its socio-political aspects:

- Representing imperial culture at home: cookery books, empire advertising and colonial shops in European cities. (What kind of foodstuffs did the colonial shops sell? To whom? How was the food packaging influenced by the imperial imaginary? To what extent did the images of the empires and colonies on the packaging foster/encourage the sale of a specific foodstuff? How were these images used for economic/sales purposes? To what extent were foodstuffs and their packaging used to enforce and legitimize the empire? Do the sources show echoes of the empire in foodstuff names, culinary techniques or other food-related topics at the local, national or global level?).
- Legitimizing and de-legitimizing the empire through food. (What kind of food and foodways were employed in order to reach the aims of legitimation and de-

legitimation? To what extent did the images of the empires and colonies on the packaging contribute to the selling of specific foodstuffs?)

Food, empire and its cultural aspects:

- Exporting the home country: European foods, cuisines, recipes, and meals in the empire and their circulation, interactions, interdependences, connections and networks. (Connections could be both synchronic and diachronic, i.e. connections between the imperial past and the present day).
- Resistance to European imports and possible formal and informal boycotts of European products (rejection, negotiation).
- People: how children, adults, men, women, and racialized bodies were used in order to help the diffusion of new foodways; to what extent they were the target of the diffusion of unknown foodways?
- Appropriation of colonial foodways in the metropolises and vice-versa (the blurred boundary line between European and 'native' foods).
- 'Cultural biographies' of some specific food (how their meanings changed over time).
- How did new tastes spread, circulate and become integrated in the European diet (ambivalence: neophilia and

neophobia; quick or slow incorporation; mediators who aided the inclusion of new tastes; how major events such as wars or famines contributed to the incorporation of previously unknown flavours).

Food, empire and its scientific aspects:

- Hygiene (anxiety about colonial dirtiness compared with the cleanliness of the metropolises; whether and to what extent colonial food was sanitized and for whom).
- Disease (scare of getting sick by consuming local food both as a residual of the humoral theories as well as for a more general sense of neophobia).
- Scientific racism (the dichotomy between savagery and civilization; how both the colonizer and the colonized perceived the unknown foodways as a lack of manners; incomprehension and scarce knowledge of what was perceived to be acceptable or unacceptable for politeness at the table).
- Nutritional, new techniques and culinary innovations deriving from the introduction of new imperial foodways.

Please submit your abstract (up to 300 words), together with a short CV (max 250 words) to the ICREFH Committee (icrefh@gmail.com) at the latest by ^[1]_[SEP] November 30th 2022.

Registration Fee: 300 euros for each speaker; 250 euros for young scholars (persons currently enrolled in a PhD/postgraduate doctoral students/persons who have been awarded a PhD/postdoctoral students, without paid posts).

The fee includes 3 nights hotel accommodation with meals. Travel expenses to Seville and extra nights are not included.

Please note that in case of cancellation or no-show, the fee will not be refunded.

The ICREFH (<https://icrefh.hypotheses.org/>) has a tradition of short presentations (20 minutes) and a long discussion. Participants are asked to stay for the full three days of the conference.

A maximum of 25 proposals will be accepted. The proposals will also be selected by taking into account the need to ensure the widest participation of scholars from different countries.

A selection of papers will be published (after double peer review).

Official Language: English.

Timetable

- November 30th, 2022: deadline for the online proposals submission to icrefh@gmail.com
- January 15th, 2023: notification of acceptance.
- June 15th, 2023: deadline for registration (fee payment) through the conference website.

- July 31st, 2023: deadline for extended abstract submission through the conference website.
- October 4th-6th: Conference.

Registration and all exchange of information and documents will take place through the conference website that will be communicated at the beginning of 2023.

The symposium is organized by Ilaria Berti, Seville, Spain.

Application Form ICREFH

**EUROPEAN EMPIRES ON A
PLATE (c. 1750-today)**
October 4th-6th 2023, Seville.

NAME:

TITLE:

INSTITUTION:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

E-MAIL :

Provisional title of Paper:

Theme:

Summary of Topic (max. 300 words):

Signature, date:

