



Deutsches Historisches  
Institut in Rom  
Istituto Storico  
Germanico di Roma

# Material Culture and Colonialism. Theoretical Perspectives and Methodologies between History and Art History



Workshop, Rome,  
4 December 2024

## Conference venue

Deutsches Historisches Institut in Rom  
Istituto Storico Germanico di Roma  
Via Aurelia Antica, 391  
I-00165 Roma  
[www.dhi-roma.it](http://www.dhi-roma.it)

## Contact

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Please register for in-person or online attendance



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Fig.: Colonial officer's helmet of the 'African Hunters', Kingdom of Italy (private collection).

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in studying objects from a historical perspective. While art historians have traditionally paid close attention to the materiality of things, the *material turn* is more a recent approach for historians. This workshop at the German Historical Institute in Rome aims to foster a reflection on the methodological approaches developed by both disciplines. Particular attention will be paid to objects

related to European colonialisms, whether in museum collections or private households. Going beyond the question of provenance and restitution, the focus is on the material culture that permeated a historical moment and its aftermath. How can the study of objects and their materiality contribute to an understanding of the past? In particular, what do objects add to the knowledge and interpretation of the colonial past?



Wednesday, 4 December 2024

9.30 Carmen Belmonte | Roma  
Nicola Camilleri | Roma  
Laura Moure Cecchini | Padova  
Bianca Gaudenzi | Bolzano - Cambridge  
[Welcome and Introduction](#)

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## I - Material Culture Methodologies

10.00 Susan E. Reid | Durham  
[Global Assemblages in Soviet Homes](#)

10.30 Eva Maria Troelenberg | Düsseldorf  
[The Impasse of a Ship and the Speed of Images.  
The \*Ever Given\* Incident as an Object-  
Lesson for Narratives of Past and Present](#)

11.00 Coffee break

11.30 Discussion

12.00 Lunch

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## II - Colonialism and Material Culture

13.30 Chris Jeppesen | Cambridge  
[The Elephant \*not\* in the Room. Nostalgia,  
Absence and the Memory of Empire](#)

14.00 Sarah Laurenson | Edinburgh (online)  
[Stories of Stone. Exploring Colonial Histories  
in Nineteenth-Century Scottish Jewellery](#)

14.30 Richard Hölzl | München (online)  
[Fascist Colonial Collaborations. Acquisitions of Cultural  
Assets from the Italian Colony East Africa \(Ethiopia, Eritrea\)  
by the Ethnological Museum Munich, 1937–1941](#)

15.00 Coffee break

15.30 Discussion

16.00 Concluding Remarks