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The British Empire and the History of Capitalism

21st Summer School in British History

and the History of the British Empire

Munich, 3 - 6 September 2024

Capitalism, broadly understood as an economic and social order characterized by profit-seeking and market exchange, has become constitutive of modern societies. The expansion of trade between Europe and Asia since early modern times facilitated a boom in capitalist enterprise not only in Northwestern Europe but also in large parts of the world that now became linked to the global economy. The coercive, exploitative practices of colonialism and the expansionist forces of imperialism undergirded this global growth of capitalism.

The history of capitalism and capitalist expansion on the back of European imperialism has long drawn the interest of historians. For example, the colonial capitalism of the cash-crop plantations in the Americas and the parallel growth of the transatlantic slave trade has been much debated for its impact, both on the rise of industrial capitalism in the nineteenth century, and on the current shape of the world. The emergence of world markets under the auspices of industrialization and imperialism went hand in hand with a transformation of economic structures and global labour relations. The British Empire stood at the centre of these fundamental shifts in the world economic order. Global capitalism on the back of empire catapulted Britain into a global economic power, arguably at the cost of its colonies, such as South Asia.

This summer school will engage with the history of capitalism in the British Empire especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Our tutors, Professor Maxine Berg (Warwick), Dr Karolina Hutkova (LSE), and Professor Tirthankar Roy (LSE) will discuss key questions regarding the development of capitalism in the British transatlantic economy as well as in the relations between Britain and South Asia, stressing the circulation of resources (capital, knowledge, people, and/or materials) as well as economic, social, and political conditions in these and resulting from those developments. Finally, the course will explore how the history of capitalism in Britain's imperial past has shaped, and continues to shape, modern Britain and its former colonies.

The summer school is a part of the on-going collaboration between the German Historical Institute London and the Ludwigs-Maximilian University, Munich. The course convenors are Professor Alexander Engel (LMU Munich) and Dr Indra Sengupta (GHI London).

The course will take place at LMU Munich on 3 - 6 September 2024. It is aimed at advanced BA or MA students of history or other related subjects at all German universities. An interest in the history of the British Empire and the history of capitalism is desirable.

Please note: Selected participants will be expected to attend all the classes. The course language is English and participants will be required to study the mandatory readings (around 15 chapter/article length pieces) to prepare for the classes. The readings will be sent out a few weeks ahead of the course.



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The course is open to students from all German universities. **However, a separate selection process applies to students from the LMU who should directly contact the convener Professor Engel.**

Please apply in writing by **Friday 12 April** with the following documents:

- A cover letter of 1-2 pages explaining why you wish to take part in the summer school;
- A brief letter of recommendation from your supervisor;
- A list of courses you have attended and exams you have taken

The organisers will bear the cost of accommodation in Munich and sandwich lunch will be provided on the days of the summer school. It may be possible to make a small contribution towards the cost of travel to Munich. Unfortunately, we are unable to cover any other costs.

Please send us your application as a **single PDF file** and by email only to Dr Indra Sengupta i.sengupta@ghil.ac.uk