Travels, Books, Audiences and Empires, 1400-1800

This seminar intends to analyse the complex relationship between early modern European empires and the world of travel and travel accounts in the same period. The main purpose is to discuss the ways in which the “travel-imperial experience” was interwoven with writing and reading practices, book-manuscript circulation and reception, library organization, etc. One will also focus on the role of images and the European status of non-Western knowledge.

The seminar integrates a workshop on “Islam and Europe in early modern books” (final programme and dates to be announced in due time). Each seminar session will be introduced by a brief presentation of the readings by one or two participants. The researchers are also expected to take actively part to the discussion based on the comment of these readings.

January 13: Introduction: approaching the subject - trends, historiography, bibliography

January 20: Early modern travels and travellers: the overseas-imperial context
Readings:
- Peter Mancall, Travel narratives from the age of discovery (OUP, 2006), introduction, pp. 3-48.
- Joan-Pau Rubies, Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance. South India through European Eyes, 1250-1625 (CUP, 2000), ch. 10 (“From humanism to scepticism: the independent traveller in the seventeenth century”), pp. 349-387.

January 27: Print and manuscript, markets and publics
Readings:
- Peter Burke, A social History of Knowledge. From Gutenberg to Diderot (Polity, 2008), ch 7 (“Selling knowledge: The market and the press”), pp. 149-176.

February 3: Collections of voyages, reference books and overseas libraries
Readings:
• Jonathan Earl Carlyon, Andres Gonzalez de Barcia and the Creation of Colonial Spanish American Library (University of Toronto Press, 2005), ch. 4, pp. 118-164.

February 10: Images and Visual Culture

Readings:

February 17: Native knowledge in European Clothes

Readings:

February 24: Workshop (1st session): “Islam and Europe in Early Modern Books” [speakers and readings TBA]

March 10: Workshop (2nd session): “Islam and Europe in Early Modern Books” [speakers and readings TBA]

March 17: Conclusions; Invited speaker - Professor Carlos Alberto Gonzalez Sanchez (Universidad de Sevilla / EUI Fernand Braudel Fellow) [topic and readings TBA]