



Postdoc fellowships at the Department of Social Sciences – University of Naples Federico II (Naples, Italy)

National Project PRIN 2022

Imperial Entanglements: Latecomer Colonial Empires and the “Politics of Comparison” (1880s-1940s)

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The **Department of Social Sciences**, Naples (Italy), invites applications for a 1-year (renewable up to 18 months) postdoc fellowship for the academic year 2023-2024

Host Institution: Department of Social Sciences – University of Naples Federico II

Website: <https://www.scienze sociali.unina.it/>

Brief Description of the research within the national project “Imperial Entanglements”:

“Imperial Entanglements” investigates four cases of late imperialism, namely those of Germany, Italy, Belgium, and Japan. Each of these countries entered the phase of colonial expansion only towards the end of the 19th century. Because of this delay, when their power elites and experts fashioned new structures of imperial governance, they had to consider existing models of colonial governance and administration, as previously established by other powers. Seeking original visions of their imperial projects, they engaged critically with existing models, adopting, reshaping, or rejecting their fundamental features.

The project focuses on the circulation and reworking of political models from the 1880s to the 1940s, spanning both the so-called Age of Empires and the post-Wilsonian moment, when colonialism was profoundly reshaped around the world due to the emergence of strong anti-colonial movements. The project is based on two pillars. The first is what Ann L. Stoler has called the “politics of comparison,” or how each state compared its own colonial rule with that of others. This concept highlights the importance of knowledge transfers as a constitutive part of the empire building, but also highlights the “politics” of constructing models and distancing oneself from the other. The second is the focus on transimperial actors, be they intellectuals, politicians or institutions.

This research grant specifically focuses on the case of Belgium.

The researcher will focus on the following questions:

- How did Belgian politicians and intellectual elites represent the Belgian empire and its colonial policies in relation to other empires? And how did they construct historical or legal representations of other empires?
- What kind of trans-imperial networks did they strive to build in an attempt to elaborate their own model of colonial politics?
- Is it possible to identify turning points in the Belgian “politics of comparison” and in the trans-imperial connections?
- How did the international circulation of imperial models influence Belgian jurists and administrators in the period considered?

Even if the contract does not obligate to fix residence in Naples, the research fellow is required to be present in certain periods which will be agreed with the PI, in order to participate in common initiatives, discuss the progress of the project, and coordinate with other researchers members of the project.

Application Deadline: 4 December 2023

Eligibility: Applicants must hold a PhD granted by 20 October 2023. They must present a research project on a subject relevant to the above described research program.

Salary and Benefits: Salary is € 25,000 per year. Research fund available

Tenure: The Fellowship program begins in Winter 2024 and ends in Winter 2025 (presumably February 2024 – February 2025, except renewal for six months)

Location: Naples (Italy)

Application

Instructions about how to apply can be found here:

Italian: http://www.unina.it/documents/11958/44654577/SSOC_AR-10_2023.10.20.Bando.pdf

English: http://www.unina.it/documents/11958/44654577/SSOC_AR-10_2023.10.23.Bando-Ingl.pdf/

Applicants must submit:

1. copy of ID
2. cv
3. list of publications
4. max 3 publications
5. copy of the documentation proving possession of the required qualification or declaration in lieu of certification (see Annex C)

For further information, please contact olindo.denapoli@unina.it