

CALL FOR PAPERS

Power and Resistance within Commodity Chains, 1800-2000

***Third Annual International Workshop of the Commodities of Empire Project
London, 29 June 2009***

The Ferguson Centre for African and Asian Studies (Open University) and the Caribbean Studies Centre (London Metropolitan University) are jointly organising the third annual international workshop of the Commodities of Empire project.

The serious financial crisis in which the world finds itself today is a contemporary manifestation of a global commodity system which has been built up over time and is the project's object of analysis. This year's workshop aims to explore further these historical antecedents and contribute particularly to the growing research interest in the concept of the 'commodity chain', understood as a transnational network of processes (i.e. extending beyond the local but not necessarily 'global' in scope) that moves a product along different stages from production to consumption. In particular, it will aim to explore: first the different power positions among actors involved in the chain (producers, traders, transporters, consumers) paying particular attention to the significance of prevailing economic and political regimes; and second, the various modes and strategies of local resistance to the attempted imposition of export-oriented commodities by colonial and/or foreign interests.

Presentations might wish to focus on some of the following questions:

- How were power positions negotiated and established at various points in the commodity chain?
- To what extent did power relations (e.g. colonial, neo-liberal, class, race, gender, ethnicity) determine the production of particular commodities?
- How did local, indigenous actors respond to the attempted imposition of particular conditions of export-commodity production?
- Did local actors possess the resilience and resources to influence or redirect the 'pathways' of particular commodity chains?

This workshop is primarily aimed at doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. We are particularly keen to hear from such scholars based in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. Paper proposals (consisting of an abstract of up to 400 words, and a brief CV) should be sent, by 31 March 2009 to:

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Workshop organisers:

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