

Sanitizing Imperial Pasts

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Stream Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DNp6C5m1R_I

How do the empires of the past continue to exist today? And what is forgotten when bygone empires are so adamantly remembered? For the past five-and-a-half years, the Max Planck Research Group, "**Empires of Memory: The Cultural Politics of Historicity in Former Habsburg and Ottoman Cities**," has investigated these questions by examining the cities of central Europe, the Balkans, Anatolia, and beyond. The "In Dialogue" event "Sanitizing Imperial Pasts" will present selected results from this research in order to explore how bygone empires continue to shape our world today.

Sanitizing the past occurs when we approach complex historical legacies from the presupp-

sitions of present values. As the collective work of the research group has illustrated, imperial pasts are especially prone to sanitization in the current era. In this discussion, we will highlight the sanitization of Habsburg and Ottoman pasts, but our aspirations are broader. We aim to grasp the common features of sanitized imperial pasts, from the Roman and Aztec to British and Soviet. Several themes and questions will organize our conversation: What are the prominent genres and media through which imperial pasts are sanitized as collective memories? What are the political consequences of sanitizing imperial pasts? And what alternative forms of counter-memory challenge this sanitization?

For further reading: https://www.mmg.mpg.de/877408/WP_21-03_Walton_Post-Empire.pdf

