

International Values and Global Science, 1880-1939

University of Exeter:
Monday 27th – Tuesday 28th August, 2012

The history of internationalism from the late-nineteenth century to the interwar period, and its tense relations with national rivalries, global empires and the establishment of totalitarian regimes, has been a major area of recent debate and investigation. Much attention has focussed on networks of communication, commerce, voluntary society, humanitarianism, empire, philanthropy and the various organizations around the League of Nations. Yet scientific institutions – with the possible exception of medical networks and the spread of technology – have often seemed to be absent from these discussions. Despite the wide literature on the cultural and social significance of the sciences within global and national societies across this period, and the growing interest in the tensions between national and internationalist ambitions in scientific work, it remains the case that the connections between these historiographies are little understood.

The aim of this conference is to build links and dialogue between historians of modern science and medicine and historians of international society in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, and scholars working in each of these fields are welcome. We particularly aim to interrogate the place of scientific networks within the international culture of the period, how scientific values, institutions and concepts influenced and were shaped by wider forms of internationalism, and how these worked within wider processes of international interaction, rivalry and contestation.

Possible questions to be addressed are:

- How far has there been a tension between national and international aspirations in scientific work, and how far have they operated synergistically?
- Have certain forms of science – such as in the physical, biological, cultural, medical, or social sciences – historically been more or less suited to internationalist cooperation?
- In what respects have international and global media, commercial institutions, and philanthropic bodies interacted with medicine and science?
- In what ways did non-scientific internationalist organizations and networks attempt to use scientific language or authority to promote their agendas?
- How far and in what ways did scientists and scientific institutions participate within wider international bodies?
- How did authoritarian, totalitarian and extra-European modernizing states interact with international scientific networks?
- What were the effects of the disruptions of the First World War and interwar period on the international community of scientists?

This conference is supported by the ESRC-funded project ‘Tianjin Under Nine Flags: Colonialism in Comparative Perspective, 1860-1949’ (based at the Universities of Bristol and Swansea), and the Centre for Medical History at the University of Exeter. It is intended to build upon the project’s engagement with questions of global circulation, contestation and exchange in this key period, setting an agenda for future research and

collaboration. We are therefore particularly interested in hearing from scholars working on linkages and connections beyond Europe, and on connections between different colonial or extra-European regions.

We will be able to offer 1-night of accommodation for speakers, and may be able to offer limited financial assistance with speakers' conference expenses and travel on application to the conference organizer. An edited volume based on selected papers is also planned.

Please send abstracts for individual 20-minute papers (maximum 300 words), or panel proposals (3 paper abstracts plus 300 word panel rationale), plus a short biography, to C.Manias@exeter.ac.uk by **Thursday 31st May**.

Successful participants will be notified in the week beginning Monday 4th June.