



Italian Settler Colonialism and Genocide

This KNIR Research Dialogue includes two lectures which explore the concept of settler colonialism through the lens of Italian colonial history. Firstly, it considers whether the term "settler colonialism" can be applied to the Italian colonisation of Africa. Secondly, it addresses a key argument in settler colonial studies: the notion that settler colonialism necessarily involves the extermination of the indigenous population.

Emanuele Ertola (University of Siena)

"Italian Colonialism and the Question of Settler Colonialism"

This lecture examines whether and how the category of settler colonialism can be applied to the Italian case. Long considered "exceptional" within the European colonial experience, Italian colonialism is increasingly reassessed through comparative perspectives and analytical frameworks originally developed for the British world. By questioning the notion of Italian uniqueness and testing the usefulness of transnational categories, the lecture reflects on the role of settlers in the Horn of Africa and beyond, highlighting what this approach can reveal about the dynamics of colonial rule, its afterlives, and Italy's place in global histories of colonialism and decolonization.

Ali Abdullatif Ahmida (University of New England in Maine, USA)

"Settler Colonialism and Genocide: Confronting Eurocentrism, Silence, and Invisibility"

This lecture presents a critical assessment of the reproduction of colonial historiography on settler colonialism and genocide and an alternative, innovative research on subaltern oral agency, based on Ahmida's new book on the forgotten Libyan genocide and its causes, which originated in 1911 and evolved during WWI. The lecture will focus on the dominant scholarship and historiography; alternative critical scholarship; the history of fascist genocide in Libya based on the agency and narrative of a Libyan who survived the concentration camps between 1929 and 1933; and suggestions for a new research agenda based on a critical model of Italian Fascism.

Date 09/10/2025
Time 17.00 CEST
Location KNIR, Via Omero 10, Rome

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To attend in person register at secretary@knir.it, to attend online scan the QR code