

## WORKSHOP

### **Queering colonial visual archives: visual sources, archival research, and queer and postcolonial historical practice.**

**Wednesday 24 April 2024, 10:00 – 13:00 (Sala del Torrino)**

Organised by the EUI Queer and Feminist Studies Working Group and the Visual and Material History Working Group

### **Programme**

**10:00-11:00 Talk by Gee Semmalar and Q&A.**

*Transgender history through colonial photography in British India (1860-1890).*

The talk addresses how gender was produced through visual codes of caste in late nineteenth century British India through an exploration of colonial ethnographic photography. Through an in-depth analysis of two photographs from The British Library Archives, the talk will be delivered by Dr Gee Imaan Semmalar. He will focus on the materiality of the two albumen prints, the historical and discursive fields in which they were produced and contemporary archival practices as co-constituting the meaning of these photographs. Inspired by the expansive view of the agential relationality between human, non-human and more-than-human worlds in some indigenous cosmologies like that of the Santhal, Munda, Anishinaabeg and Maori peoples, he reads the non-human as elements that constitute the meaning of photographs. By reading the agential role of the materiality of the photographs (how they perform history and meaning), the technology of the camera (how it claims “objectivity”) and the archives (how the organisational practices of cataloguing co-author the meaning of the photographs) it presents important methodological approaches to colonial photography. The talk will be of interest to those working on colonialism, archives, visual and material histories and decolonial methodologies.

Dr Gee Semmalar is an activist, artist and scholar working on legal histories, queer epistemologies, archival studies, critical colonial studies and critical caste studies. Currently, as Max Weber postdoctoral fellow in History at the EUI, he is working with Prof Benno Gammerl and Prof Pieter Judson on his first monograph.

**11:00-11:15: Break**

**11:15-13:00: Discussion on primary sources.**

Participants can bring and share one primary source related to the workshop's topic and discuss it together with Gee Semmalar and the other researchers. Each of the presenters will have 5 minutes to present the document and its context and then there will be around 10/15 minutes of discussion.



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