

## Special Issue of Global Nineteenth-Century Studies on “Poetry and Social Institutions in a Transimperial Frame”

Although the nineteenth century is a site of prolific and creative institution-based poetry, the wide spectrum of this poetical subgenre remains little explored. This proposed special issue of Global Nineteenth-Century Studies will focus on poems written by figures who were not in positions of authority and who inhabited nineteenth-century social institutions—factories, prisons, hospitals, workhouses, schools, churches, clubs, mechanics’ institutes—within different empires and their colonies. How and why did workers, employees, inmates, and paupers often choose poetry to express their views on the institutions to which they belonged? In what ways did poems embrace or reject the social order within the walls of a given institution? How did the uses and purposes of poetry as a social practice converge or diverge within distinct European and non-European empires?

Occasional poems will be considered here as sources of history from below and as valuable testimonies to the limited but paradoxically significant latitude the poets of the popular classes were offered by their social institutions. Contributors are invited to examine how institutions encouraged the production of poems in the nineteenth century, and how poetry, in turn, reinforced the existing social structure—in part by constructing a relationship that was internalized by the members of the institutions and grounded in their acquiescence to the social systems and institutions. How did poetry create ties between groups that shared social norms or, conversely, how did various forms of resistance in poetry lend themselves to a subversive hearing or reading within these institutions? Indeed, some forms and practices of poetry may not have been revolutionary, but they nevertheless conveyed a certain degree of

unwillingness to accept social norms while pointing to a need for reform; other poems, more innovative in form, more radical in content, and using the social practices within the institutions to their advantage clearly expressed some disinclination toward and even defiance of the social systems.

Papers that undertake comparisons are certainly welcome. However, the guest editor also invites essays that are more narrowly focused with the intention of selecting a proper mix to encourage comparative study of institutions and empires. Areas of interest for this special journal issue include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- Institutional poetry (factory, workhouse, asylum, prison...poems)
- Poetry and social order/disorder
- Poetic circles within institutions
- Poetry as a social or cultural practice in institutions
- The uses of poetry in social systems
- The conditions of the emergence of poems in institutions
- The poets laureate of institutions
- Poetry and acquiescence of governance
- Poetry and resistance to governance
- Poetical forms and subversion
- Poetry that travels across institutions and empires

In addition to those based in literature departments, scholars who work on poetry in other disciplines (history, musicology, and so on) are warmly invited to participate. Proposals (300-500 words, plus a CV) for essays of roughly 4,500-5,000 words will be due 1 September 2022 and will be sent to: [fabienne.moine@u-pec.fr](mailto:fabienne.moine@u-pec.fr)

Essays will be due 1 March 2023.

**Contact (announcement)**

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