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*The Desert Locust and Its Enemies: Science, Sovereignty and Statecraft at the  
End of Empire.*

### **Abstract**

This talk examines how key regions of Africa and the Middle East became central to British campaigns to eradicate locusts in the period 1920-1960. By examining these anti-locust campaigns, the paper explores the wider flows of power, influence, and claims to authority that emerged from them. Driven by British conceptualizations of the locusts' own migrations, these regions witnessed the arrival of thousands of troops and the development of new infrastructures and legal landscapes of 'food security'. It considers the impact of these campaigns upon the capacity of the late colonial state to project power into arid hinterlands and across frontiers, and makes an argument about how these inland regions became critical sites in a new round of political conflict over imperial influence in the era of decolonization.

### **Keywords**

*Decolonisation, Science, Development Aid, British Imperialism, Africa, Middle East*