CALL FOR PAPERS
Global Environmental Borderlands in the Age of Empire

A Joint Symposium in 2019-2020 Sponsored by the William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies at Southern Methodist University and Stanford University

The Clements Center for Southwest Studies at Southern Methodist University in Dallas and the Center for Spatial and Textual Analysis at Stanford University in Palo Alto solicit proposals for papers that explore the environmental history of borderlands in the early modern world.

An initial meeting will be held at SMU’s satellite campus in Taos, New Mexico in Fall 2019 to be followed in Spring 2020 by a conference at Stanford. We expect a university press will publish the papers as a volume edited by conference co-organizers Johan Elverskog (Southern Methodist University) and Ali Yaycioglu (Stanford University).

The symposium and the resulting volume mark an opportunity to (re)consider the environmental contexts of borderlands and frontiers of different political orders, particularly pluralistic imperial regimes, roughly between the 15th and 19th centuries. While examining how environmentality was negotiated by human actors of bordering (or overlapping) political regimes, we also intend to explore possibilities that go beyond the binaries between nature and culture, and environmental and political orders.

We welcome papers focusing on mountains, forests, rivers, lakes, swamps, steppes, deserts, seas and oceans, under-seas, subterranean and aerial spaces as environmental borderlands and frontiers of different large-scale (imperial) human organizations. In these undertakings, however, we are particularly interested in contributions with holistic conceptualizations of eco-orders of humans and non-humans, which can challenge established anthropocentric approaches. We do not have any geographical priority. Our concerns are truly global. To this end we plan on bringing together scholars working on the environmental history of borderland regions around the world. We also welcome digital history projects.

We welcome submissions from scholars of any rank or affiliation who are eager to contribute substantively to what promises to be an exciting and important academic endeavor. By the deadline of October 1, 2018 applicants should submit a one-page CV and a proposal of 500-800 words to Johan Elverskog (johan@smu.edu) describing the research undertaken and its connection to the goals of the conference. For more information about the symposium please contact Johan or Ali Yaycioglu (ayayciog@stanford.edu).

Images: Images: Persian miniature courtesy of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (left); Japanese Botanical courtesy of Wikimedia (right).

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