

**International workshop**  
**Oceania and the Pacific Rim: borders and**  
**transnationalism in the Oceania-North America and Oceania-Asia regions**

In November 2016, the CHCSC research centre at the University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines organized a workshop entitled “North America and Oceania: issues in relations between two changing cultural and political areas.”<sup>1</sup> This event aimed to reflect on the characteristics and complexity of current relations between the countries or regions of North America and Oceania, as well as engage in a comparative study of their nations’ and territories’ approaches to shared issues of regional or global significance in the economic, social, legal, environmental and cultural realms. At this November 2016 event, presentations by invited researchers focused on the following issues: aspects of the diplomatic relations between the two geopolitical spaces, indigenous alliances in resisting colonial and postcolonial legacies in the regions and finally, cross-cultural influences between these two regions, particularly in the context of sporting events.

A second workshop will be organized at the University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines to continue the conversation on the current relations between Oceania and North America, and to expand it to include the interactions between Oceania and Asia, given the shifting dynamics in this large region and the current reflections on the evolution of the role of this geopolitical space in global dominance. Moreover, this second workshop will take the dynamic process of bordering as its main prismatic lens, in the context of the study of regional, national and international issues. A bordering perspective on the relationship between geopolitical spaces implies and at the same time goes beyond the study of such spaces as territorial entities defined by their physical borders; it involves the study of borders at diverse socio-spatial and geographical scales and thus implies an analysis of the construction of borders by groups that make up new communities of interest through ideology, attitudes, political discourses, social choices, struggles (etc.) beyond national borders. This would also involve an analysis of cultural, literary and artistic perceptions on borders, as areas that create and separate national spaces, but also as in-between locations, liminal zones or ‘borderlands’.

The questions that a border perspective on North-American-Pacific and Asian-Pacific relations raises are the following: which states from these two geopolitical areas are creating supra-national alliances in order to deal with current regional/international issues, such as the “refugee crisis”? Which socio-spatial areas that cross the geopolitical borders/boundaries of nation states within and between these geopolitical areas are being created as a consequence of the globalization of human concerns? Which specific interests do these spaces defend or oppose, such as notions of property or privilege and on what ethical, civic or political grounds do certain movements seek to challenge traditional borders? What are these regions' common or differing approaches to major international issues (issues related to migration, human rights, sustainability, new-colonization, etc.) and through what kind of transnational relations by civil society, through what kind of cultural cross-pollination, are traditional borders challenged and new border areas elaborated?

For the scope of this conference, Oceania will refer to Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the dozen other sovereign states among the southern and equatorial Pacific Islands and

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<sup>1</sup> To access the November 2016 conference program, go to: <http://www.chcsc.uvsq.fr/centre-d-histoire-culturelle-des-societes-contemporaines/langue-fr/actualites/journees-d-etudes-/north-america-and-oceania-issues-in-relations-between-two-changing-cultural-and-political-areas-396973.kjsp> .

the various dependent territories in the region. “North America” encompasses Canada, the United States, and the island states and territories of the Caribbean. Asia will refer to South and Southeast Asia, and in particular to China, India, Indonesia, Japan and Malaysia—countries who share or have shared significant interests with the Oceania region. The following are suggested issues to be examined within this bordering perspective:

**I. International relations: cooperation or disunity in the Anglosphere and beyond, in connection to global issues.** Suggested topics include:

- responses to transnational environmental issues (ocean protection and climate change), energy issues and human rights issues in these three geopolitical regions;
- cooperation between small island states of the Pacific, the Caribbean and/or the Indian Ocean (for example on matters of environmentally sustainable social and economic development);
- recent evolutions in North America-Oceania and/or Asia-Oceania relations (in the context of Donald Trump’s presidency): on international cooperation, trade (whither the TPP?), military alliances and international security, etc.;

...

**II. Nationhood and borders in a globalised, ‘post-colonial’ world.** Suggested topics include:

- the notion of ‘Americanisation’ of Pacific societies (perceptions and realities, responses...);
- Pacific cultural influences in North America and Asia (the image of Pacific societies; the place and visibility of Pacific migrant communities; cultural projections by Pacific states for purposes of tourism or trade, ...: the mechanisms of the construction of Pacific imagery, perceptions and stereotypes);
- the ‘colonial’ question in the United States’ Micronesian territories, or in American Samoa: the strategic usage of these territories in US foreign policy; the functioning and adaptation of local institutions derived from US models; perspectives on these territories’ future, and their viability as potential states, ...;
- liminality, trans-border identities and cultural perceptions thereof.

This interdisciplinary conference welcomes researchers in the humanities and social sciences, including researchers in history, anthropology, the arts and literature, as well as political science and law. Presentations of 20 minutes (followed by 10 minutes of questions) will be given in English or in French.

**Date: October 5, 2018.**

**Location: University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, France**

**Proposals for papers, panels or round tables should be sent to Adrien Rodd ([adrien.rodde@uvsq.fr](mailto:adrien.rodde@uvsq.fr)) and Sophie Croisy ([sophie.croisy@uvsq.fr](mailto:sophie.croisy@uvsq.fr)) before June 1, 2018. Notification of acceptance will be emailed by July 15.**