

**International workshop
North America and Oceania: borders and
transnationalism in the English-speaking world**

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.”¹ 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.

In order to continue the conversation on the current dynamics and relations between these Anglophone spaces, a second workshop will be organized that will take bordering, qua dynamic process, as its main prismatic lens, in the context of the study of regional, state and international issues. A bordering perspective on the relationship between two 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 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 are being created, as a consequence of the globalization of human concerns, which cross the geopolitical borders/boundaries of nation states within and between these geopolitical areas? 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 brought into question and new border areas elaborated?

For the scope of this conference, “North America” will refer to Canada, the United States, and the island states and territories of the Caribbean. Oceania encompasses Australia,

¹ 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> .

Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, the dozen other sovereign states among the southern and equatorial Pacific Islands, and the various dependent territories in the region².

The following are suggested issues to be examined within this bordering perspective:

I. International relations: cooperation or disunity in the Anglosphere, in the face of global issues. Suggested topics include:

- responses to transnational environmental issues;
- cooperation between small island states of the Pacific and the Caribbean (for example on matters of environmentally sustainable social and economic development);
- responses to, and effects of, Donald Trump's presidency on North America-Oceania relations: on international cooperation, trade (whither the TPP?), military alliances and international security...

II. Nationhood and borders in a globalised, 'post-colonial' Anglophone world. Suggested topics include:

- the notion of 'Americanisation' of Pacific societies (perceptions and realities, responses...);
- Pacific cultural influences in North America (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 the arts and literature, as well as political science and law. Presentations will be given in English or in French.

Publication, however, will be in English.

Date: January 26, 2018.

Location: University of Strasbourg

Proposals for papers, panels or round tables should be sent to Ron Leask (rleask@unistra.fr) before 5 September 2017.

² Commonly used in France, the name *Océanie* excludes Asian or American states with a coast on the Pacific, as well as Asian island states on the ocean's edge. It does, however, include Hawaii.