

CFP: “Water Logics” International Conference April 11-12, 2019, Tulane University (New Orleans)

Announcement published by Edwige Tamalet Talbayev on Wednesday, March 20, 2019

Type:

Conference

Subject Fields:

Atlantic History / Studies, Geography, Maritime History / Studies, Humanities

“Water Logics” International Conference

April 11-12, 2019, Tulane University (New Orleans)

Program available at: <https://waterlogics2019.wixsite.com/mysite>.

All events free and open to the public

Taking its critical cue from New Orleans’s unique liminal position on the Gulf Coast, *Water logics* starts from the shoreline as a threshold, as a point of departure away from land. Beyond the shore, where land meets water, how can water and bodies of water be conceived? To what forms of thought, art, literature, or politics do they give shape? The Gulf Coast’s porosity blurs the very notion of the shore as a cartographic threshold point: the land emerges from water and yet is immersed in water, infiltrated by it. In the wake of storms, resurgent floodwaters coat much of the land, eroding its structure. Taking the space of the sea as a point of inquiry, this conference rethinks the aqueous both within and beyond its contiguity with landed logics. It approaches the spatial component intrinsic to considerations of the watery in its complex relationship to the multifold transitions and translations afforded by the sea’s liquidity. Through a comparative approach to waterscapes from oceans to seas to waterways and embayments, we will address the following question: what kinds of aesthetics, transnationalism, knowledge transfer, and translational practices specific to the sea can we devise once diverging, geographically disparate oceanic sites of knowledge production are brought into contact?

Looming increasingly larger over our disciplinary constructs, seascapes have slowly come to complement academic taxonomies rooted in the fragmented, exclusive terrains of national literatures, teleological narratives, and other land-bound theoretical constructs. Drawing from characterizations of the aqueous as a “site of intellection” and “imaginative projection” (Wigen 2007), this conference seeks to

Citation: Edwige Tamalet Talbayev. CFP: “Water Logics” International Conference April 11-12, 2019, Tulane University (New Orleans). H-Announce. 05-27-2022.

<https://networks.h-net.org/node/73374/announcements/3897118/cfp-%E2%80%9Cwater-logics%E2%80%9D-international-conference-april-11-12-2019>

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foster cultural, archeological, historical, literary, and philosophical inquiries into the production, performance, and dissemination of knowledge across maritime spaces: the Caribbean Sea of our conference locale, but also the circum-Atlantic world, the Pacific Ocean, the Mediterranean, and the Black Sea in their interrelations. With an eye towards the “material condition and praxis of the maritime world” (Blum 2010), we call for a reorientation of practical methodologies towards a comparative geophilosophy of watery spaces beyond dominant transit tropes (the sea as an expanse to be traversed or bridged in a series of physical, metaphorical, and historical transitions).

Contact Info:

Edwige Tamalet Talbayev, Associate Professor, Department of French and Italian, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA

Contact Email:

etamalet@tulane.edu

URL:

<https://waterlogics2019.wixsite.com/mysite>