Call for Papers: MLA 2023 East Asian forum sessions

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The LLC East Asian forum is seeking participants for 5 sessions at the 2023 MLA Convention, to be held in San Francisco January 5-8, 2023. See the session abstracts below for details on how to submit an abstract.

"Comparative Approaches to Indigenous Literatures of East Asia and North America: A Roundtable"

The Indigenous Literatures of the United States and Canada Forum and the East Asian Forum aim to open up a roundtable conversation about the generative potential of thinking about indigeneity comparatively. What is at stake—politically, intellectually, aesthetically, pedagogically—in the project of comparison? What strategies or methods could guide such comparative projects? How might comparative questions shape understandings of indigenous histories? We hope to bring together scholars of the indigenous literatures and cultures of North America and those of East Asia for a discussion of comparative indigeneities. We are seeking one-paragraph proposals/position statements that help explore the possibilities of comparative approaches involving East Asian and North American Indigenous literatures, or what results from thinking in terms of comparative histories. Please send proposal and one-page C.V. to Eric Anderson (eandersd@gmu.edu) and Janet Poole (janet.poole@utoronto.ca) by 3/15/2022.

“East Asian Literatures of the Palaeoanthropocene”

This panel seeks papers that address literature and the environment in premodern East Asia in relation to the concept of the palaeoanthropocene. If “Anthropocene” demarcates the era beginning in roughly the eighteenth century, during which environmental devastation has radically transformed the global climate and environment, we propose that “Palaeoanthropocene” be used for the earlier period, during which human interventions in their ecosystems were already widespread, but can be distinguished in both form and scale from those of later eras. Studying the literatures of the Palaeoanthropocene allows us to see representations of ecosystems that are radically different from those affected by the environmental devastation of the Anthropocene, from biodiversity unimaginable in the present to landscapes now submerged for the sake of hydroelectric power. But these sources also remind us that, even in the distant past, humans were responsible for drastic and permanent transformation of the environment. These interventions include deforestation, irrigation, mining, urban development, and the introduction of species to new environments. As scholars of literature, we recognize that texts do far more than simply capture information. Their authors operate within frameworks of genre and aesthetics that must be taken into account when treating their literary writings as a medium through which to view their world. The broad regional scope of this panel encourages us to reimagine premodern East Asia in relation to the rivers, mountains, forests, and seas that span cultural and linguistic boundaries, without losing sight of the unique local contexts within which representations of these environments were produced. We seek proposals that address representations of human interaction with and/or transformation of the natural world from premodern East Asia, including but not limited to texts in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, from the eighteenth century and earlier. Please send 250-word abstract and one-page C.V. to Anne Commons.
The Queer Posthuman in Speculative Fiction from the Asian Diaspora

This session focuses on issues of gender, sexuality, tradition, and futurity in speculative fiction by diasporic Asian-heritage authors—including, but not limited to, authors located in East Asia. Works discussed may also be written in non-Asian languages. Please send 250-word abstract and one-page C.V. to Carlos Rojas (c.rojas@duke.edu) by 3/15/22.

Sea and Oceanic Imaginations in East Asia

The sea has for millennia connected different lands and peoples within and beyond East Asia. How did the migration of people, texts, and things by sea redefine the relationship between identity and territory, nation, and region? What theoretical, methodological, and material insights can be gained by taking an oceanic perspective on the historical boundaries of race, ethnicity, and nationality in the East Asian world? The choice of period is open but papers on the early modern era to the early twentieth century are particularly welcome. Please send 250-word abstract and one-page C.V. to Suyoung Son, Cornell University (ss994@cornell.edu) by 3/15/2022.

Technologies of Protest in East Asia: Movement, Mobilization, Revolution

The East Asian Forum is seeking papers that explore the aesthetics, histories and ongoing politics of protest practices in contemporary East Asia. How have different media shaped forms of protest? What are the tensions between movements and revolution? Between movements and mobilization? How do individuals and collectives emerge within the practice of protest? What light does a transregional focus on protest technologies shed upon their meaning? By “contemporary” we refer to the late twentieth century onward to the present day. Please send 250-word abstract and one-page C.V. to Susan Hwang (shwang1@indiana.edu) and Janet Poole (janet.poole@utoronto.ca) by 3/15/2022.

Related date:
March 15, 2022