

Call for Papers

Transcending Boundaries – Interdisciplinary Insights in Transpacific Studies

TPSN Hybrid Conference

February 9-10, 2024 at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany and Online

Terisa Siagatonu knows a thing or two about not being afraid to rile up her audience. The Samoan American poet and Pacific Islander activist pushes listeners to reflect on what it means to come from a region of the world that is often misunderstood, if not altogether ignored. In “Atlas” (2018) she memorably writes:

If you open up any atlas
and take a look at a map of the world,
almost every single one of them
slices the Pacific Ocean in half.

This metaphorical “butchering” of the Pacific and its peoples, as she later refers to it, is repeated in other contexts beyond the world of maps. From Asia’s increasing global economic standing, to the climate (change) crises in Oceania, or the on-going transnational migration developments in North and South America, reasons abound for navigating the cultural landscape of the Pacific both in an effort to rediscover historical connections and to establish new areas of collaboration and exchange that account for that which we, as Siagatonu writes, “miss when looking / on a map of the world.”

The Transpacific Studies Network (TPSN) was established in the fall of 2022 with the goal of exploring Pacific cultures, ecologies, histories, literatures, politics, and societies in an interdisciplinary, multi-lingual, and, importantly, transregional manner. While the network was started in the context of (US-)American Studies, it is open to anyone with Transpacific interests. To this purpose, the network gladly invites all scholars of the Pacific to the first TPSN hybrid conference “Transcending Boundaries” set to be hosted on February 9-10, 2024 in Mainz, Germany.

We seek contributions that explore connections across national and regional borders in and along the Pacific. The presentations (no format restrictions) should not exceed 20 minutes. The event will serve as a space to discuss early stage-research and on-going projects in this field. We welcome papers deploying new and innovative practices in Transpacific Studies and encourage in particular emerging scholars (current PhD candidates and recent graduates) to apply. This call, however, is not limited solely to scholars, we also welcome artists and practitioners who engage with the region in their work.

Possible topics may include:

- Film and television that culturally crosses the Pacific Ocean
- Literary works (novels, memoirs, poems, etc.) from and about (Trans)Pacific regions
- Representations and/or performances of gender in (Trans)Pacific regions
- (Trans)Pacific mobilities and migration, including policy
- The Pacific and the Blue Humanities
- Climate change and the environment in (Trans)Pacific regions
- (Trans-)Pacific issues of collective memory
- Understandings of geography/space/territory in relation to (Trans)Pacific regions
- Negotiating cultural hybridity
- Revitalizations of (Trans)Pacific traditional ecological epistemologies
- Reflections on practices and imaginations of borders/bordering in the Pacific

Abstracts of no more than **300 words** should be submitted along with a 100-word biography to **transpacificstudiesnetwork@gmail.com** by **20 September 2023**. Selected participants can expect to be notified by early October 2023.

Organized by:

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