

Call for papers

International conference of the International Association for Alpine History (IAAH), September 3th-5th 2020, University of Lausanne

Mountain „global“: a Comparing Story of the Natural Science in the Mountains, 16.-19. Century

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Since the renaissance research on the indigenous nature in mountains regions has experienced a major boom. After the discovery of America, the Spanish crown started to claim „relaciones“ (reports) from sailors, as well as from local officials, to gather information about the nature and people of the newly discovered territories. The goal of these consults was the optimization of the administration in the overseas regions. Under the rule of Philipp II (1527-1598) *cuestionarios para la formación de las relaciones geográficas* were printed. They contained a lot of questions for the officials in the colonies and asked them, to give written information (Solano 1988; Álvarez Pelaéz 1993). The subjects of a lot of questions were the mountains and their nature (Mathieu 2011). At the same time, a similar „discovery“ of the Alps started (Korenjak 2017; Boscani Leoni, Mathieu 2005). Examples for this are the mountain ascents and the botanic researches of Conrad Gessner (1516-1565) (Boscani Leoni 2016), the geographic and the natural history work of Josias Simler *De Alpibus Commentarius* (Zurich, 1574), moreover the text of Valerio Faenzi (approx. 1525-1598) (Faenzi 2006) and Francesco Calzolari (1522-1609) (Calzolari 1566). A similar movement can be observed in the 17th century in Tibet with the Jesuit mission.

During the 18th and 19th century, for exempla, the Andes, the Alps and the Himalaja were once more a central focus of nature researchers, as the trips to the alps by Horace-Bénédict de Saussure (1740-1799), the Chimborazo expedition by Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859), or the journey of the Jesuit Ippolito Desideri (1684-1733) to Tibet (Filippi 2014) prove.

The case studies of the conference IGHA 2020 focus on the natural history research in mountainous regions from 16th to 19th century and emphasize these three aspects:

- The actors, objects and practices: Who were the actors of this research? What role do local scholars or laymen play in this process? How and what was researched and why? Which specimens (objects) were collected? Where were they transported to and why?
- Circulation of knowledge: How, where and by whom was this knowledge received, translated, possibly transformed and applied in another cultural context? How did the exchange of information and the circulation of the results work and through what channels? An example for this is the European reception of botanical research in Latin America: Francisco Hernandez (ca. 1515-1587), the court physician of Philip II of Spain, collected circa 3000 new plant species in Mexico and in Peru. He had to handle the problem of translating their names from Náhuatl to Spanish (Barrera 2006).
- Periodization: Is it possible to recognize different periodizations of the research on nature depending on the mountain region and on the research topic? With which changes (e.g. professional specialization, professionalization of the research) can one explain the possibly different periodizations?

Please send your proposal (with max. 400 words) until the end of July 2019 (31.07.2019) to: simona.boscani@hist.unibe.ch; hotel expenses and – if possible also – travel expenses will be refunded.

Literatur/Bibliographie/Bibliografia/Bibliography

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