The Ancient Borderlands International Graduate Student Conference

Beyond Borders: Ancient Societies and their Conceptual Frontiers

April 16-18, 2010

The Ancient Borderlands Research Focus Group at the University of California at Santa Barbara invites graduate scholars of any discipline to submit abstracts for papers addressing the question of ancient borderlands, both physical and conceptual. The conference will be held at the beautiful campus of UCSB, home to the first Ancient Borderlands research group. Limited travel funds are potentially available for those who cannot procure department funding from their home institution.

Tentative Panels:

- Destruction, Reappropriation and Memory in Urban Space
- Migration and Diplomacy: Responses to Population Movement and Growth
- Violence in the Construction of Identity in Late Antiquity
- The Monstrosity of Others: Representations of Friends and Foreigners

Borderlands, loosely defined, are frontier zones lying along given boundaries, limits beyond which something—a discipline, an ethnic group, a “nation”—transforms into something else. The creation, maintenance, and even transgression of identity occurs in these borderlands, tangible and intangible. The Ancient Borderlands Graduate Conference is intended to apply borderland theories and concepts to the ancient world. Further, since the nature of borders themselves includes a variety of perspectives, the study of borderlands fosters an interdisciplinary approach. With this focus in mind, we encourage, although do not require, papers that respond to a recent monograph adopting this approach, *Violence and Belief in Late Antiquity: Militant Devotion in Christianity and Islam*, by Thomas Szigorich.

Greg Fisher, Assistant Professor of Classics at Carleton University will deliver the keynote address. Professor Fisher’s research interests focus on the Roman and Sasanian Empires in Late Antiquity. He is particularly interested in political and cultural change, especially amongst the peoples who found themselves at the limits of imperial power but affected by the many pressures which arrived with clientship, military service, and incorporation into local religious or political practices.

We particularly welcome papers focusing on the following temporal and geographical areas, although papers with a thematic focus on Borderlands in other contexts may also be considered:

- The Mediterranean world up to the 8th century CE
- India up through the Huna Conquest (5th century CE)
- Japan through the Nara Period (794 CE)
- China from prehistory through the end of the T’ang Dynasty (907 CE)
- Southeast Asia up to 1431 CE
- The Americas up to and including early European contact
- North Africa through 750 CE
- Sub-Saharan Africa through the Askumite Empire (947 CE)

Please send your 500 word abstract to ggoalwin@umail.ucsb.edu by **February 1, 2010** and include “UCSB Ancient Borderlands” in the subject of the email.