



FRONTIERS OF HUMANITY AND BEYOND

TOWARDS NEW CRITICAL
UNDERSTANDINGS OF BORDERS

P22 - **WOMEN AT BORDERLANDS: FEMALE AGENCY AND POLITICAL NEGOTIATION AT THE EDGES OF EUROPEAN EMPIRES S, XVI-XVIII**

ORGANISER

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ABSTRACT

Regarding the traditional construction of the frontier concept as a space marked by violence, arbitrariness, risk, illegality and impunity and helplessness, the image of the colonial borderlands has been conceived as a predominantly male universe or, as Silvia Ratto said, "the realm of caudillos, of strong men who dominate their retinue of men". This perspective has clouded the role of Mestizas, Criollas, Indigenous and European women in the Empires Borderlands. However, women have been studied as war booty, both in captivity and in other operations of violence that sought to dismantle the enemy by attacking female bodies. On the other hand, the projection of borderlands as a refuge for practices and subjects outside the norm opened the horizon to make the social accepted models of the feminine more flexible.

This panel invites to present contributions that address female agency in the multiple frontiers of European Empires among the 16th and 18th Centuries. The aim of this panel is to exchange different experiences of women in militarized frontiers which have been "naturally" associated to male agency. Nevertheless, it is possible to reclaim the roles that women played in this environment, such as peace negotiations, their roles in political alliances, marriages and kinship, life in missions, sexuality, transgressions and female networks of collaboration. We also invite to present theoretical and methodology inputs on the matter. A gender-based perspective is necessary to subvert a male centered history of colonial borderlands.

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