

Call for Conference Papers

IMAGINING THE GLOBAL PAST

Antiquities, Early Modernities,
& the Humanities Today

MAY 17-18, 2027
Research Symposium

UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON | DIVISION of the HUMANITIES

The **global past** was shaped by the movement of texts, objects, people, knowledge, and ideas across linguistic, religious, and political boundaries. From the circulation of books and manuscripts to the exchange of goods, technologies, and intellectual practices, the global past emerged through encounters that connected distant places while transforming local cultures and communities. This globalization continues to set the stage for ongoing cross-cultural knowledge exchange across disparate fields of humanistic study today.

This **two-day symposium** provides scholars the opportunity to share new research on these encounters, exchanges, and imaginaries from antiquity to the early modern world, while reflecting on the methods, archives, and intellectual commitments that shape global historical inquiry in the humanities fields today. We welcome work grounded in literary studies, intellectual history, religious studies, classics, history, and related humanities disciplines.

Contributions might examine literary and intellectual exchange across cultures; the transmission, translation, and formation of knowledge; global, comparative, and connected histories; religious encounter and intellectual exchange; the circulation of scientific, philosophical, and theological knowledge; material culture, mobility, and exchange; oceanic histories; or the formation of local, regional, and global identities. We encourage papers that engage critically with the opportunities and challenges of pursuing global scholarship across the literary and historical fields.

The symposium also invites participants to reflect on **broader questions** raised by this research: How do we study the global past in fields grounded in deep linguistic, historical, and philological expertise? What does it mean to pursue research whose geographic, linguistic, or archival scope extends beyond the boundaries of a single field? What forms of intellectual exchange become possible when researchers engage archives, languages, and scholarly traditions beyond their primary areas of specialization? What can scholars of antiquity and early modernity learn from one another as they seek to understand the global past? And what does global scholarship look like at a moment when historically oriented fields are becoming smaller, even as our research questions become larger?

Keynote Speakers



Russ Leo
PRINCETON
UNIVERSITY
English Literature



Andrew Hui
NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY OF
SINGAPORE
Comparative
Literature &
Sinology

Organizer **W**

Rhema Hokama
UNIVERSITY OF
WASHINGTON
English Literature &
Religious Studies
rhema@uw.edu

Please **submit** a CV and 300-word talk abstract to **Rhema Hokama** (rhema@uw.edu) by **October 1, 2026**. Notifications of acceptance will be sent shortly thereafter.

Co-sponsored by the Division of the Humanities, the Simpson Center for Humanities, the Jackson School of International Studies, Religious Studies, the East Asia Center, and China Studies

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