Ford-LASA Special Projects Competition Application: Tepoztlán-Kayb’alan
Contact: Micol Seigel, mseigel@indiana.edu

Overview: This proposal requests funds to bring together members of the organizing collective of the Tepoztlán Institute for the Transnational History of the Americas, scholars from the United States and Mexico, with members of the Kayb’alan Centro de Análisis, Formación e Incidencia del Pueblo Maya, based in Huehuetenango, Guatemala, for a weeklong writing retreat and professionalization seminar including time for individual writing, research presentations, essay workshops, and mentorship regarding publication, conference participation, and doctoral program applications, as well as planning for conference submission and collaborative research projects across the two collectives.

Proposal:
The remarkable young scholars of the Kayb’alan Centro have made impressive strides in academic development despite great obstacles. Like other indigenous scholars who navigate higher education, they have transcended the serious deficiencies in Guatemala’s public school system, particularly its rural outposts. According to UNESCO, levels of illiteracy exceed 60% among indigenous populations, and are even more egregious for women and girls. Against all odds these ambitious and capable students, the majority women, though also including men, have finished bachelor’s and master’s degrees and obtained certificates in various specialties. While working as social workers, lawyers, and notaries, they have begun writing on the questions of violence, sovereignty, military power, class and gender in Guatemala that concern them. To support this writing, they have organized the Kayb’alan Centro, a seat from which they can discuss, analyze, and organize, and they have endowed it with official legal status, meeting space, and personnel.

To give their work the scholarly rigor it will need to be influential, and to advance their objectives of knowledge production and the training of Maya scholars, the Kayb’alan Centro members must overcome serious obstacles. In the face of discriminatory demurrals of mentorship in Guatemala it is difficult for them to take next steps in academic careers. After two of their number participated in the Tepoztlán Institute for the Transnational History of the Americas, they reached out to the collective that organizes the Tepoztlán Institute in another attempt to realize their objectives.

The Tepoztlán Institute reunites scholars from nations throughout the Americas, with regular representation from Mexico, Guatemala, Cuba, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and the United States. Organized by a collective of roughly twenty scholars, the Institute meets for one week in the town of Tepoztún, in Morelos, Mexico, discussing an annual theme, attempting to move the work of the sixty to eighty participants in more rigorous theoretical directions and to foster collaboration and connection across regional divides in the Americas. It has met annually for ten years (more details available at http://legacy.clark.edu/~tepo/).

The Kayb’alan Centro asked the Tepoztlán collective to work with them to attain five goals. First and overall, they hope for a focused encounter with Tepoz colectivistas in which senior scholars would read drafts of academic essays Kayb’alan members have written individually and together, to provide feedback on research methods, content, bibliography,

and possible publication venues. Second, to help prepare ambitious research proposals building upon those essays, identifying angles of approach that would constitute critical contributions to the field, bibliographies of secondary literature, and archival sources. Third, to help Kayb’alan scholars identify, apply to, and fund graduate study in programs in Guatemala, other nations in Central America, Mexico, and the United States. Fourth, to discuss other aspects of professionalization that will help these young scholars engage at conferences and in the classroom, and expand the number of Mayan scholars in academe in Guatemala as well as other Central and North American nations. Fifth and finally, to initiate collaborative projects between Kayb’alan and Tepoztlán collective members, ongoing research initiatives for co-authored publication.

Kayb’alan Centro scholars hope to develop their familiarity with a range of research methods to pursue work on topics relating to international migration, gender, indigeneity, and development. They hope to (continue to) work on poverty reduction, gender, and citizen participation in Guatemala’s electoral process; on language pedagogy, bilingual education, and textbook development for Maya-speaking students; on youth identity in Mam communities; on indigenous rights, agroecology and biodiversity, food sovereignty and security, and the interactions of social movements and public institutions; on social and indigenous movements in Guatemala; on international agreements regarding human rights; on the rights of indigenous communities, agrarian law, and constitutional law; on violence against indigenous migrants in Central America, Mexico, and the United States.

Participating scholars from the Tepoztlán Institute Collective share many of these interests. Vrana is a specialist in Guatemalan history whose work examines state power and resistance historically, focusing specifically on student protest movements in the context of Guatemala’s changing political context after WWII. Guidotti-Hernandez focuses on violence, gender, race, and ladino-indigenous relations in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands. Saldaña-Portillo is a highly respected scholar who writes about the history of revolutionary thought and development discourses, with expertise on Mexico and Central America and comparative race politics in the Americas. Warren is a broadly trained historian and expert on the history of medical and scientific interventions in indigenous communities in the Andes from the colonial period to the twentieth century. His participation will provide another comparative perspective on indigenous politics and state power (and anchor the gathering at his home institution’s research retreat). Finally, Belausteguigoitia analyzes the relationship between gender, race, identity, and culture in Latin America, focusing on processes of gender and exclusion. She has extensive collaborative research experience into questions of indigenous women and violence, and as a Latin American scholar with graduate and professorial experience in the U.S., is usefully familiar with institutional landscapes in Mexico as they compare and relate to those in the United States. Together, the Tepoztlán scholars offer the scholars from the Kayb’alan Centro a wealth of tools, concepts, and guidance for advancing their academic work.

The Tepoztlán Collective would be thrilled at the opportunity to advance some of its most treasured goals, supporting indigenous knowledge-production, feeding social movement capacity, and creating linkages among scholars from Latin America and the United States. We are members of institutions with resources to make this happen, signally LASA, the Tepoztlán Institute, and the University of Washington. We would use LASA funds to occupy UW facilities (the scholarly retreat of the Whiteley Center, specifically), the
Tepoztlán Institute, and LASA’s congreso 2015 to support the professional development of Kayb’alan Centro scholars. This project fosters a hemispheric collaboration seeded by the two collectives, developing precisely the kinds of transregional connections the LASA Special Projects Fund hopes to support. It will build curricular and scholarly capacity among all ten participants, with benefits then flowing out to the other members of the Kayb’alan collective as participants take the lessons and resources home. It will enrich the scholarly panorama of all members of the Tepoztlán collective as well as participants in the 2014 Institute who will have the opportunity to interact with and read papers by the Kayb’alan authors. It will bring larger contingents of indigenous scholars into LASA at the 2015 congreso, the Tepoztlán Institute, and the halls of academe most broadly as these students are able to breach the walls of doctoral programs. It will enhance the curricular and teaching potential of these scholars and their collaborators by supporting their research and professional growth. Finally, it will enrich scholarly conversations in virtual arenas such as journals, books, and beyond on the live and vital topics of violence, state power, civil-military relations, women and gender, rurality, territoriality, and power.

Participants, I: Kayb’alan Centro
• Elsa Hernández Méndez, B.A. in Social Work, Universidad San Carlos de Guatemala, Quetzaltenango; MA in Social Anthropology, Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico, D.F., honorable mention for thesis.
• Ana Elizabeth López Ramírez, B.A. in pedagogy, Universidad Rafael Landívar, Campus Quetzaltenango (in process).
• Pascual Pérez, B.A. in Communication Sciences, with certificate in Alimentary and Nutritional Security and Sovereignty, Universidad Rafael Landívar; M.A. underway in Sustainable Rural Development, Facultad Latinoamericana de de Ciencias Sociales; currently writing thesis.
• Alonzo Láinez Ortiz, Diploma in Maya Linguistics, Facultad de Humanidades, Universidad Rafael Landívar, and Legislative Campaigning, School of Political Science, USAC; Social Anthropology, Escuela de Historia de la Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala; M.A. in Decentralization, Campaigning and Local Power, CUNOC, Quetzaltenango.
• Vicente Jiménez Sales, Attorney and Notary, M.A. in Criminology, with certificate in Constitutional Law; additional certificates in Penal Codes Relating to Violence against Women, Criminological Theory, Indigenous Rights.

Participants, II: Tepoztlán Institute Collective
• Marisa Belaustegui-Goitia Rius, Professor of Gender Studies, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Ph.D. UC Berkeley. Director, University Program in Gender Studies, UNAM. Author, Gúeras y Prietas: género y raza en la construcción de mundos nuevos, Enseñanzas desboradadas, Fronteras y Cruces: Cartografía de Escenarios Culturales Latinoamericanos with Martha Leñero; Fronteras, Violencia y Justicia: Nuevos discursos with Lucía Melgar.
• Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, Associate Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis, New York University; Director, Latin@ Studies. Ph.D., Stanford. Author, The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas in the Age of Development (Duke UP, 2003).
• Heather Dillon Vrana, Assistant Professor of History, Southern Connecticut State University. Ph.D., Indiana University.

**Objectives:**

- To seed and foster an enduring hemispheric collaboration among members of two scholarly collectives.
- To bring indigenous Guatemalan scholars into conversation and alliance with ladino scholars from Central and North America, creating conditions of possibility for further collaborative research and publication.
- To capacitate Maya (Mam) scholars to pursue further academic training, increasing the number of indigenous scholars working in university settings.
- Specifically, to support Kayb’alan Centro scholars to apply to, fund, and complete doctoral programs in the humanities and social science fields of their selection.
- To capacitate indigenous scholars to produce scholarship that can intervene in violence against indigenous people and promote human rights.
- To support the Kayb’alan Centro in its scholarly activist work against violence against women and indigenous people in Guatemala.
- To enrich academic spaces such as LASA and the Tepoztlán Institute as well as the more abstract spaces of the halls of academe with greater contributions from the epistemologically-privileged standpoints of indigenous scholars.
- To publish academic articles authored by individual members of the Kayb’alan Centro or the Tepoztlán Institute, and by clusters of these scholars working together on topics of mutual interest.
- To nourish collaboration leading to a longer published academic work co-authored or co-edited by members of these two collectives.

**Process:**

The first phase of this project will take place in the second or third week of June, 2014. Participants will travel individually to Seattle on the Tuesday of the selected week, and then together to the Whitely Center on Wednesday morning. The first evening will include welcome and introductory events. The bulk of the week will be spent in mornings devoted to individual writing and then afternoon group sessions, first a workshop focused on a pre-circulated paper by each of the Kayb’alan participants, and then addressing a topic critical to their academic development.

Sunday will be unscheduled. Tuesday evening a farewell dinner will discuss the work to be done to prepare for paper presentations at the Tepoztlán Institute, and proposals for LASA 2015.

In July, participants will reunite again at the Tepoztlán Institute. Each Kayb’alan collective member will give a paper at the conference, receiving the intense constructive criticism that is the norm there. A special session will be held on the last day of the Institute for all ten participants plus any other Tepoztlán collective members who wish to attend, to discuss the Institute feedback and finalize plans to submit proposals for panels to LASA 2015, Puerto Rico.

In August, participants will communicate via email to finalize proposals for LASA 2015, due September 2014. Support activities as needed for LASA participation will be planned as the conference approaches.

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**A graphic schema of the week at the Whitely Center**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Travel to Seattle</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Travel to the Whitely Center; Welcome dinner, introductions, icebreakers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Afternoon session 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Individual writing</td>
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<td>Individual writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Individual writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Travel to Seattle, and then home</td>
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**Afternoon sessions:**

I. Research methods: ethnography, literary analysis, historical research, statistics, surveys, polls; interdisciplinarity, quantitative/qualitative approaches.

II. Conference attendance: why attend; how to find appropriate conferences, write abstracts & proposals, organize panels, craft a presentation.

III. Doctoral programs: appropriate programs, application process & timing; funding graduate study: locating grants, writing competitive proposals.

IV. Publishing: range of types of publications, venues, submitting papers.

V. Open: topic to be decided by participants during the week.

**Budget:**

- 5 x travel Guatemala City-Seattle (round trip); $800 each $4000
- 4 x travel, US academics, to Seattle $0
- Hotel, Seattle, night before travel to SJI (9 people) $600
- Ground transportation, Seattle $200
- Transportation to San Juan Islands (ferry, 10 roundtrip) $500
- Whitely Center housing (10 people, weekly rate) $1200
- Whitely Center meals ($28.50/week/person) $285
- 5 x travel Guatemala-Mexico City (roundtrip); $500 each $2500
- 5 x travel, US academics, to Tepoztlán $0
- 5 x Tepoztlán Institute registration fees ($300 each) $0
- 5 x travel, Guatemala-Puerto Rico for LASA 2015 ($600 each) $3000

**TOTAL** US$ 12,285

**Budget narrative:**

Funds are requested for travel for the five participants from Guatemala, one night in a hotel prior to travel out to the Whiteley Center on the San Juan Islands, travel via ferry (far cheaper than air travel, and equal to or less than van rental and quicker than driving), costs for the Whitely Center housing, and return travel. We must apply to the Whitely Center for use of these facilities, once some funding support is secured. The second phase of the project will take place at the Tepoztlán Institute, July 23-30, 2014.

Note that as one participant (Warren) is based in Seattle, transportation costs and hotel fee are not needed for him. In addition, U.S. academics will seek travel support from home institutions, rather than seeking LASA support. Finally, the Tepoztlán Institute fee for the Kayb’alan participants will be waived as a courtesy by the Tepoztlán collective.