AAG 2017 Call for Paper Proposals

**The Ores of War:  Mining, Resource Frontiers, and Histories of Industry and Imperialism**

Rare Earths, Coltan, Radio-Nucleotides and Radioactive metals are among the most coveted and contested materials on our Planet. These elements, and the geological substrata which they are found, have formed the material basis of competing imperial, colonial and post-colonial adventures in far-flung corners of the world in the race to make weapons and security infrastructures more durable, long-range, and deadly. They are conceptualised as dangerous, unstable, and threatening and also subject to unprecedented demand in our contemporary era. Public presentations of this demand tend to emphasize the progressive products of consumer capitalism and social-democracy, such as mobile phones, renewable energy technologies, and equipment for both space exploration and advanced medical care, while criticisms concern the hazards of violence, pollution, and possible threats to regional or national security.  In many cases, both positive and negative perspectives frame these materials and their collection or coveting as a decidedly contemporary problem, unique to our contemporary context of technological progress, climate crisis, and geopolitical instability.

Of course our collective present is in reality certainly not the only moment in which these complicated ores and isotopes have been sought or desired. Accordingly these sessions examine colonial and post-WWII covert and public initiatives on the part of multiple competing powers to acquire these critical materials.  Data revealing the work of militaries, imperial and post-imperial states and the private sector in the exploration, exploitation, capture and accumulation of these materials globally tends to reside in the often difficult to access documentary and archival milieu surrounding colonial developmental agendas, war, geology and geodesy. Papers will consider the temporal, geographic, epistemological, and political resource frontiers in which and at which these ‘Technology Metals’ have been sought through historical and geographic perspectives, to better contextualise the nexus of interests and actors driving contemporary forms of exploration and exploitation. Toward that end, papers drawing on oral histories, institutional ethnographies, as well as newly opened or under-examined archival materials are especially welcome.

To be considered for inclusion in these sessions, please direct all queries and abstracts of 200 – 300 words to both session organizers:

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Deadline for submitting abstracts: **Monday, October 17, 2016**