The Conquest of Nature

Instructor: Perrin Selcer

3 credits
INTLSTD 401.007
sem (MW 2:30-4 pm)

Course Guide Shortcut:
bit.ly/fa18_hist407-001

This course explores how economic development projects have transformed environments and human communities. These schemes include mega-projects like huge dams and canals, as well as scientific forestry, soil conservation, and plant breeding. We will read exemplary historical studies of national, imperial, and international development programs, paying close attention to metaphors of war and to literal connections with national security; to the ways the conquest of nature has reinforced or altered relationships of power between and within countries; and to the unintended consequences, both tragic and fortuitous, of attempts to improve nature.