

Call for papers - Conference

Borders. Movements, everyday life, illegalities (1939-1945)

February 24, 2018 - Salle Marc Bloch, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne (Paris, France)

Second World War historiography has largely focused, after 1945, on national particularisms and on regional and national perspectives. These studies highlight the history or the microhistory of a society in a small or large geographical area, confronted with the disruption of a war, often followed by that of the Nazi rule. The transnational perspective has only very recently emerged, for instance encouraged by the publication of the collective work *1937-1947 : la guerre-monde* edited by Alya Aglan and Robert Frank in 2015,¹ or Olivier Wieviorka's 2017 work on the European resistance, which offers a comparative approach to the different clandestine movements in several countries in Western Europe.²

The goal of this conference will be to pursue these reflections with a resolutely transnational approach, taking as the central object the dynamics of cross-border spaces or of spaces linked to the proximity of a border during the Second World War.

The border, both a geographical object and an administrative demarcation, occupies several roles in the specific context of the 1939-1945 period. First, there are the old borders between states that encourage the development of illegal and clandestine activities. In this case, the border is a synonym for hope, namely for the refugees who left their countries to escape arrest or the violence of the occupiers, or for the Allied aviators who fell and were then rescued and evacuated from the territory thanks to an escape line. The border also stands for a relationship with time, turned towards the future and towards the other because it is open to the circulation of ideas.

Other borders symbolize more coercion, such as those that burst into everyday French life just after the defeat in May–June 1940 with the division of the national space into seven different zones. The imposition of borders then could create disarray for the local population. As in the example of the dividing line studied by Eric Alary,³ these borders have been felt as wounds and rips in the domain of the lived space, where the perception and the practice of the territory were shattered.

What impacts did these new or old borders have on the ordinary life of the *in situ* populations? To what extent did the different resistance groups and the Allied headquarters on which some of them depended include these borders in their strategy? Are those exclusion zones, or did they allow for the development of movements and exchanges of all kinds between populations, or between resistance organizations that fought for a common goal? Did the shared realities occasionally lead to an erasure of the national distinction and, by extension, of the notion of border in the eyes of the people of the time?

The objective of this conference is to confront the results of recent historical research about the European space in the given period. Major themes to explore include, but are not limited to:

- The administrative constraints imposed on the local populations' everyday life. What accommodations or adjustments were they forced to endure? The question of the exit from the war also stands. How have the disappearance of a restrictive border and the return to the pre-war situation been lived? Did this engender phenomena of subsequent memorialization or representation?

¹ Alya Aglan and Robert Frank, eds., *1937-1947 : la guerre-monde* (Paris: Gallimard, 2015).

² Olivier Wieviorka, *Une histoire de la résistance en Europe occidentale* (Paris: Perrin, 2017).

³ Eric Alary, *La ligne de démarcation* (Paris: Perrin, 2003).

- The displacement of populations escaping the occupier, illegal border crossings, or the legal or illegal circulation of goods, ideas or capital through the borders between countries. Additionally, at the scale not of populations, but of individuals, did people's perceptions of national identity or belonging evolve when they were confronted with the choices linked to the occupier's presence?
- Illegal activities, whether linked to a resistance organization or to the individual actions that the presence of a border generates.

Each presentation, in English or French, is to last a maximum of 20 minutes. Panels will be followed by some questions from the audience. Each participant is to submit the complete text of his or her article to the organizers by the day of the conference at the latest, for a possible publication in French of the conference proceedings.

Submission rules

Abstracts should be submitted as a single PDF file. They should include a title, a summary of the presentation of maximum 300 words, and a short biographical introduction. The 300-word summary of the presentation should include the thesis and the arguments that will be presented. The name of the author, his or her institutional affiliation, and his or her email address should be clearly indicated in the PDF file.

Send your abstracts to the organizing committee at colloquefrontieres@gmail.com by **October 15, 2017, at the latest**.

Organizing committee

Benedetta Carnaghi (Ph.D. student in Modern European History, Cornell University, USA)
 Vincent Houle (Ph.D. student in Modern European History, SIRICE, in a joint supervision between Paris 1 and the University of Montréal, Canada)
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Scientific committee

Alya Aglan (Professeur d'histoire contemporaine, Université Paris 1 - Panthéon-Sorbonne)
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 Barbara Lambauer (Chercheure partenaire, UMR SIRICE - Sorbonne-Identités, relations internationales et civilisations de l'Europe)
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