

Borders in Alpine History

Congress of the International Association for the History of the Alps
in collaboration with the University of Innsbruck

Innsbruck, 20-23 September 2017

Call for Papers

The International Association of the History of the Alps will organize its next biannual conference on the topic of borders. The conference organized in collaboration with the University of Innsbruck will be held in Innsbruck, September 20 – 23, 2017.

The first section will deal with the nature of borders. How do natural features (rivers, mountain ranges, swamps) influence the establishment of borders? Who debated the “naturalness” of borders and for what reasons? Are there differences between political, economic, linguistic and confessional spaces? What historical constellations favored the adjustment, fortification, relaxation or removal of borders?

A second section will concentrate on the production of knowledge (and/or technologies) about borders. How were borders defined and how were they publicized and by whom? Were borders imagined as a clear line or a transition zone? How were borders inscribed into maps and how were they made visible in the landscape? Is there a set of landmarks to determine borders that developed over time?

A third section will concern border controls. In which times were borders experienced as a form of crisis? When were borders controlled and who controlled them? Were people or mainly goods and animals of all kinds subject to border controls? Which goods/persons were controlled and which records were produced? Were controls mainly politically or economically motivated? Which circumstances favored changes in border regimes?

A fourth section will deal with the neglecting and undermining of borders. Are there specific reasons that cause border disputes (e.g. the moving of a border marker) and do these reasons change depending on various historic contexts? What is the connection between borders and war? Did disputes at borders or because of borders make people forget that family ties or confessional bonds stretched beyond border lines? Who lived at borders (e.g. the figure of the customs official in the novel or in the opera of the 19th century) and who crossed borders for business on a regular basis (e.g. cross-border commuters)? What was the importance of smuggling?

Submissions on all historical periods and also on mountain ranges other than the Alps are welcome. Conference languages will be German, English, French and Italian. Cost of travel and accommodation of invited speakers will be covered.

Please send your application (abstract of no more than 500 words and a short bio) in one document to Gertraud Egger (gertraud.egger@uibk.ac.at). Deadline: January 7, 2017. Successful applicants will be informed by the end of February and asked to submit an extended abstract for

the conference. Conference results will be published 2018 in the multilingual year book of the International Association of the History of the Alps „Histoire des Alpes“ (<http://www.labisalp.arc.usi.ch/en/aisa>).

For further information you may contact Gunda Barth-Scalmani (gunda.barth-scalmani@uibk.ac.at) or Patrick Kupper (patrick.kupper@uibk.ac.at).