

Call for papers international symposium

Circulations, borders and cities in the Guianas

November 7th to 9th 2018, University of French Guiana, Cayenne

Website: cfvg.sciencesconf.org

1. Call for papers

Building on the work of researchers and specialists in the last decades, recent initiatives are revitalizing thought about the changes in the French Guiana's borders, whether at the scale of French Guiana or the Guiana Shield (Blancodini P., 2010 ; Morel, Letniowska-Swiat, 2012 ; AUDeG, 2013 ; CAUE de Guyane, 2014 ; Carlin *et al.*, 2014 ; Collomb & Mam Lam Fouk, 2016). The analysis of the borders has been focused on the geopolitical stakes for many years due to many border disputes, including the « contested conflict » between France and Brazil (Vidal de La Blache, 1901 ; Lézy, 2000 ; Granger, 2011 ; Théry, 2015 ; Ferretti, 2014) or between Venezuela and Guyana (de Vilhena Silva, 2017). The contemporary approaches no longer reduce boundaries to their status as limits between territorial entities. We can say that the Guianas' borders, in particular fluvial, have a « thickness » (Agier, 2013), which allows them to be learned as spaces of exchange, active margins and creators of urban evolutions. Cross-border areas, which are often extended to the internal borders, constitute areas of mutation, where old socio-spatial structures interact with recent dynamics of settlement and development (das Chagas Martins *et al.*, 2016). Thus, the purpose of this symposium is to question the transformations experienced by these border areas from the Amazon to the Orinoco. The attention will be focused on interactions between circulations, margins and cities in the Guianas, analysed according to three axes:

❖ Circulations and mobilities

Mobility and more particularly migration are major factors in understanding the cross-border spaces. The differences among living standards, the exploitation of natural resources and political crises generate flows of populations with different profiles that modify the economic, social and cultural organizations of these spaces (Machado de Oliveira, 2009). The state of Roraima in Brazil welcomes migrants, who flee from the Venezuelan crisis, through the state of Bolivar. French Guiana faces the influx of migrants, including Haitians, who cross through Suriname. Migrations related to gold exploitation also create original territories, during a new phase of the gold fever which has crossed the Guianas since the end of the 19th century (Péné-Annette, 2016). In addition, the economic emergence of certain territories accentuates polarization dynamics and contributes to the increase of transnational migration flows, be them long-term or daily ones (Nicolas, 2016 ; Piantoni, 2009, 2016 ; Cambrézy, 2015).

It is necessary to consider the impact of transport infrastructures on these mobilities and the reshaping of border areas. The vision of the road as a vector of development has sometimes been in question, for example in the case of the extension road of the RN2 (French national road) towards the Franco-Brazilian border (Boudoux d'Hautefeuille, 2014). This extension is a step forward to the realization of the « Pan-American Atlantic » road project (Théry, 2011). The construction of roads has followed a coastal axis since the beginning of the 2000s and generate new mobilities that transform the representations that people have about distances and remoteness. In the same way, it is legitimate to question the impact of road construction along the longitudinal axis that could compete with the river, which is the traditional axis of border area exchange.

❖ **Borders and margins**

Boundaries are defined as geographical objects, lines separating two contiguous territorial systems with their own cultural, legal, social, political rules, etc. (Reitel, 2004 ; Groupe Frontière, 2004). They are driven by frontier dynamics that express territoriality and borders which give an idea of linearity (Beucher & Reghezza, 2017). These boundaries are also associated with control systems that aim to protect, collect, filter or even ban (Reitel, 2004). The borders of the Guiana Shield are often analysed from the angle of porosity and permeability (Calmont, 2007; Collomb, 2013), because these delimitations are at the heart of important mobilities.

The role of the border interface drives a variety of trade goods, services and capital. Whether by an asymmetric effect or by a polarizing effect of the river boundaries, these spaces constitute zones of passage, catalysts of economic activities and territorial edges. Circulation of goods and people in these transnational spaces is characterized by an ambivalence between legal and illegal activities. The system of control associated is « more or less explicit » (Reitel, 2004), which means that the rules of passage vary, and they depend on power relations that change and are often informal.

The specificities of the Guyanese borders invite thought about « thickness » (Agier, 2013) and on the relevance of their perception as margins (Prost, 2004). « Margin » refers to « a portion of space that, on a given scale, is located away from a center ; this distance - whether economic, political and/or social – opens other territorial realities » (Depraz, 2017). Studying these spaces allow to question the way in which the populations experience the border spaces and participate in the construction of original spaces.

❖ **Economic sectors and urban dynamics**

Formal and informal flows constitute one of the drivers of territorial construction on different scales. They are fuelled by visible and invisible dynamics that generate jobs, income and activity in cities (Péné-Annette, 2016). This economy contributes to urban development, already strongly linked to demographic dynamics. Therefore, landscapes are quickly transformed by the emergence of new urban sectors, extensive urbanization, spontaneous settlements, clearing and deforestation (Léobal, 2013; Piantoni, 2002). The cohabitation between populations of different origins also creates interactions that transform the ways of living inside of the city. It generates solidarities, frictions, and also interesting hybridization processes, which need to be analysed.

New urban forms are appearing, which allows the redefinition of concepts that were used in urban studies (Topalov et al., 2010), such as rurbanisation, urban margins, urban poverty, substandard housing, nature in the city... The relations between the inhabitants and the river need to be reconsidered: in their symbolic and cultural dimensions (Wantzen et al., 2016), in the integration of the river environment into public policies (refurbishment of the edges, infrastructures, cleaning equipment...), in the planning priorities and industrial development (Les Ateliers, 2016). Urban extension hardly remains controlled by public authorities that need to obtain tools to build adapted modes of governance. (CAUE de Guyane, 2014).

Keywords: circulation, economic sector, river, border, margin, migration, nature in the city, urban development ; Guiana Shield

2. Bibliography

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3. Scientific committee

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5. Submission methods for communication proposals

This symposium is aimed primarily at researchers and young researchers in the social sciences (geography, economy, anthropology, sociology, history, political science). Languages used in the symposium are: French, English and Portuguese.

Abstracts of papers made in two of these languages (200 words, with five keywords) are expected by **July 10, 2018**.

The deposit of abstracts is done on the website of the symposium : **cfvg.sciencesconf.org**.

The abstracts will be reviewed by the Scientific Committee and notices will be sent **on September 15, 2018**.

6. Practical information

The symposium will take place at the Troubiran's campus of the French Guiana University, at Cayenne. One day of field visits is planned, in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni (subject to modifications).

The conference website **cfvg.sciencesconf.org** contains practical information for the smooth functioning of the event (progressive update).

7. Contacts

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