



# Walls, Laws and Migrations – Past and Present

Online Colloquium – Coimbra Group,  
Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) Working Group

Thursday May 27, 2021, 4.00–7.30 pm CET

Friday May 28, 2021, 4.00–7.30 pm CET



Organizing Committee:  
Johannes Bergemann (University of Göttingen),  
Carmen Caballero Navas (University of Granada),  
Egidio Ivetic (University of Padova),  
Ilaria Poggiolini (University of Pavia)



## Programme

Thursday May 27, 2021, 4.00–7.30 pm CET

### Opening Remarks:

Prof. Dr. Metin Tolan,  
President Georg-August-Universität Göttingen  
Prof. Dr. Jürgen Barkhoff,  
Trinity College Dublin, Coimbra Group Executive Board Vice-Chair

4.15 pm **Session 1 – Walls in History**  
(organized by J. Bergemann, University of Göttingen, Carmen Caballero Navas, University of Granada and Egidio Ivetic, University of Padova)  
Session chaired by Rebecca Klug (University of Göttingen)

4.15 pm  
Johannes Bergemann (University of Göttingen)  
**Introduction to the Topic**

4.20 pm  
Johannes Bergemann (University of Göttingen)  
**Unsecured Cities and Citizen Laws: Borders and Migration in Ancient Greece**

4.50 pm  
C. Sebastian Sommer (Director of the Archaeological Service of Bavaria, Director of German Limes Commission, Munich)  
**Frontiers of the Roman Empire – The Great “Walls” in Ancient Europe**

5.20 pm  
Nicola Di Cosmo (Princeton N.J., Institute for Advanced Study)  
**The Early ‘Great Wall’ in Ancient China: Borderlands, Exchange Zone, and Middle Ground**

5.50 pm  
Carmen Caballero Navas (University of Granada)  
**Porous Borders: Life Around and Across the Fluctuating Borders of Medieval Iberia**

6.20 pm  
Egidio Ivetic (University of Padova)  
**Limites and Walls between Europe and the Mediterranean 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries**

6.50 pm  
**Discussion** (Discussant: Johannes Bergemann, University of Göttingen)

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4.00 pm **Session 2 – Walls in the Post WWII Era**  
(Convener Ilaria Poggiolini, University of Pavia)  
Session chaired by Annemarie Schantor (University of Göttingen)

4.00 pm  
Ilaria Poggiolini (University of Pavia)  
**An Introduction: From the Iron Curtain to Cold War and Post-Cold War Walls**

4.15 pm  
Hope M. Harrison (The George Washington University)  
**A Wall to Keep People in: The Berlin Wall, 1961–1989**

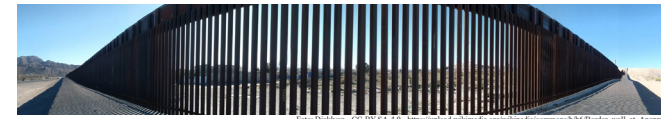
4.45 pm  
Shaul Arieli (The Israel-Palestinian Conflict, Tel Aviv)  
**A Security Barrier on a Political Route Subject to Legal Constraints**

5.15 pm  
Vassilis K. Fouskas (University of East London)  
**Impenetrable Walls: Geopolitical and Hard Security Issues in the Eastern Mediterranean**

5.45 pm  
Simone Paoli (University of Pisa)  
**Area of Freedom or Closed Fortress? Schengen and the Historical Evolution of European Border and Migration Management**

6.15 pm  
Josiah C. Heyman (University of Texas at El Paso)  
**Walls and Gateways: Examples from the U.S.-Mexico Border**

6.45 pm  
**Final Discussion** (Discussant: Ilaria Poggiolini, University of Pavia)



zoom

SSH Coimbra Group: Walls, laws and citizenship against migrations – past and present

May 27<sup>th</sup> 2021 03:00 PM Amsterdam, Berlin, Rom, Stockholm, Wien  
May 28<sup>th</sup> 2021 03:00 PM Amsterdam, Berlin, Rom, Stockholm, Wien

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## Walls, Laws and Migrations – Past and Present

The Topic:

The history and politics of walls can be traced back to the ancient world but walls and divisions are still with us today: the Roman Limes, the Great Wall of China, the Iron Curtain, the Berlin wall, the Mexican Wall on the US-American border. The main common aim of walls has been to secure well-organized state structures against uncontrolled migration as they prevent mobility of people across borders. Some of these sealed borders were/are permeable or fluctuating, others remain hermetic. The Berlin Wall and border fortifications in Germany up to 1989, were extraordinary examples of an hermetic cold war division aimed at preventing outward mobility rather than protecting from inward migrations.

In history walls have also been imaginary constructions. The Greek *Poleis* often constituted themselves with an exclusive, closed group of citizens. Pericles' civil rights law is a good example that worked for centuries. It allowed only Athenian citizens to own land in Attika. Children from mixed marriages would lose this right. Only in the imperial period did Athenians marry across the borders of the Attic state.

Civil rights laws, social systems and concrete walls constructed to be long lasting, have successfully sealed off or prevented migration and mobility for extensive periods of time. Can they do so in the contemporary world? The project for a wall on the US-Mexico border is the latest example, associated to the name of Trump, though the project predates his presidency and may still be there after he left office. Will the Israeli-Palestinian separation barriers evolve towards permanent closure? Walls of stone or concrete, or political/diplomatic divisions, strongly felt and implemented, have been and remain topical today in a Covid world that reminds us of previous pandemics and attempts at preventing their spread by fencing societies in.

The aim of this webinar is to outline interpretative frameworks for the understanding of how tools of division such as walls are built and kept in place. Which are the motivations that lead to their creation and the effects that their existence as well as their end, had/have on people, societies and governments involved and/or on the international scenario of the time.

This webinar will discuss selected cases of past and present long lasting walls/divisions in a long-term multidisciplinary perspective thanks to the participation of leading scholars in different fields of studies.