Call For Papers

As part of the project EHDLM (Writing History from the Margins) funded by Sorbonne Paris Cité, the following conference will be held at Université Paris 13, on June 18-19, 2015.

| Historians and the Margins: from North America to Former Empires |

Organizers: Claire Bourhis-Mariotti, Hélène Le Dantec-Lowry, Claire Parfait, Mathieu Renault, Marie-Jeanne Rossignol
Scientific committee: Christine Chivallon (LAM, CNRS), Elisabeth Cunin (IRD, CNRS), Odile Goerg (Paris Diderot), Ivan Jablonka (Paris 13), Martha S. Jones (University of Michigan) Elika M'Bokolo (EHESS), Mélanie Torrent (Paris Diderot).
Languages of the conference: French and English

This event is the final conference of a three-year project funded by Sorbonne Paris Cité and entitled "Writing History from the Margins: the Case of African Americans" (hdlm.hypotheses.org). This project, which involves 3 universities—Paris Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris 13, and Paris Diderot—explores the relationships between African Americans and history. A first conference (University Paris Diderot, June 12-13, 2014) investigated the works and the legacy of black historians of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Between the 1830s and 1940s these historians wrote from the margin of American society, both as amateurs, and later as professional historians, who launched journals, organized conferences, and developed institutional tools for their segregated scientific activity. The upcoming conference aims to extend the exploration to other historians who wrote from the margins. We would also like to question the very notion of margins. At a time when many wonder about the future of history as a discipline, we will examine whether margins can be considered as a site of innovation for historical writing.

Indeed, one of the objectives of this conference is to contribute to the ongoing debate about the historical discipline. Participants are invited to use the notion of "margins" to question the writing of history, its fictional and artistic representations, and the links between "professional" history and memory, between scholarly historical writing and the staging of history in museums and through commemorations.

The notion of "margins" will be considered in its widest sense, with a particular focus on historians located at the margins.

Papers may address any of the following issues, whether through theoretical explorations or case studies, without limitation of period or space:

- At a time when connected, entangled, transatlantic, and transnational histories render the opposition between "center" and "periphery" less pertinent, what exactly does it mean to write history from the margins?

- Who are historians "at the margins"? Does one write history differently when doing so from the margins? Is such history necessarily activist?
- What are the challenges involved in writing and publishing history from the margins? In the case of early African American historians, writing from the margins meant, among other things, looking for scattered sources and devising innovative solutions to break into print. How does this apply to other historians who find themselves at the margins of empire (writing colonial history from the point of view of the colonized; writing in languages other than the dominant ones), of gender (renewing historical writing from a gendered perspective in the case of female historians), of social class (writing from outside the socioeconomic and intellectual elites), and of historiography (challenging conventional wisdom; participating in revisionism)? How do we include historians of the past whose works have been forgotten, who still stand at the periphery/the margin of contemporary historians’ vision, and whose legacy often remains invisible?

Please send an abstract (300 words maximum) in English or French and a one-page CV to: historyfromthemargins@gmail.com no later than November 15, 2014.