

Writing war on the frontiers; a literary depiction of the experiences of Occupation in Corsica

Questions surrounding the geographical diversity of experiences of the Occupation have tended to have been concentrated in historical studies and to have focused upon the division of France along the demarcation line into zone occupé and zone libre (at least until 1942), or on operational differences between the numerous Resistance movements. In contrast, this paper aims to examine how questions of geographical diversity have been portrayed in fictional accounts of the period of Second World War in France. It will focus upon the experiences of war in one of France's frontier regions, Corsica, as depicted in Jean-Baptiste Predali's novel, *Autrefois Diana* (Actes Sud, 2007). The novel provides us with the primary source material necessary to examine how the territory's insular and frontier status affected its population's experiences of Occupation; to what extent an Italian occupation differed from a German one; as well as the impact in both social and historical terms of being the first part of metropolitan France to be liberated.

Autrefois Diana centres upon the classification of the library of a former noble family by a young law student. The paper will therefore debate the legacy of the war in the island's more recent history, most especially its transmission to a younger generation. It will conclude by asking how such readings have been affected by the migration of these young people to 'le continent' and therefore to the site of the dominant representation of the Occupation, in order to study and work.