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The Environmental History of D-Day and the Battle of the Hedgerows

UCLA European
History Colloquium

While D-Day has been the subject of many military and diplomatic histories, it has yet to be examined as a complex encounter between Allied forces and the dynamic natural environment in Normandy. This northern region of France is home to numerous distinctive geographic features ranging from its windswept beaches to its wetlands and its inland hedgerow country, the bocage. How did Norman ecosystems shape Allied and German mentalities toward the battlefield? How did the violent alteration of Norman environments through military bombardment, shelling, and tank warfare impact the livelihoods of French civilian communities? An environmental history of D-Day and the Battle of the Hedgerows not only reveals nature's impact on battlefield tactics, but it also offers a new conceptualization of warfare itself.



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