

Job advertisement Post Doc Displacement and Resettlement in Europe

We hire two postdoc and four doctoral researcher for our newly founded ERC research group GLORE – “Global Resettlement Regimes: Ambivalent Lessons learned from the Postwar (1945-1951)” at the University of Vienna.

The late 1940s and 1950s brought the construction of resettlement regimes on a global scale. Earlier scholarship on displacement and resettlement has treated post-war experiences in Europe (the aftermath of the Holocaust) and in Asia (for example, in China) as separate domains. This project uses a different approach showing the interconnections between the European and the Asian spheres and furthermore linking them to events in Australia and the Americas.

The project explores the potential of global history with an innovative interface to legal history, by

- (a) analysing the role of international organizations and experts (more particularly the United Nations system [UNRRA and IRO] in formulating policies that had a global impact)
- (b) analysing the interactions of this global resettlement regime with policies of state and regional/local actors and experts on a local/national level
- (c) analysing the movements of refugees across national borders and continents, and the role of communities in reshaping refugee lives
- (d) focusing on select biographical and intellectual archives and experiences, to emphasize how refugees and the media created connected imaginaries

The research group will use Social GIS methods to locate and map these flows of actors and knowledge, especially through an intensive focus on the International Tracing Service (ITS)/Arolsen archives (<https://arolsen-archives.org/en/>), which have hitherto seldom been analyzed in a global perspective. It will link this empirical corpus with data gleaned from other international, national, and local archives, as well as non-archival sources, such as refugee memoirs and biographies, and representations of refugee resettlement in newspapers and literature.

Positions:

Post Doc 1: Forced Displacement and Resettlement of Ethnic Germans after 1945 in Europe and Abroad

Post Doc 2: Forced Displacement and Resettlement after 1945 in Asia

PhD 1: Vulnerable groups of Displaced Persons: Unaccompanied Children navigating the DP camps in Europe and the resettlement schemes to get abroad

PhD 2: Vulnerable groups of Displaced Persons: resettling the physically or mentally disabled DPs in Europe and abroad

PhD 3: Hubs of Displacement: Port cities (Shanghai or Hong Kong)

PhD 4: Hubs of Displacement: transit through the Philippines

We hire 4 PhD candidates within the context of ERC research group GLORE – “Global Resettlement Regimes: Ambivalent Lessons learned from the Postwar (1945-1951)”. Starting date of project is 1.2.2023, duration is 3 years. The Research Group has also a digital humanities component and works with social GIS, to map life paths and migrants’ trajectories.

Key words: global history, migration studies, refugee agency within the migration regimes

The four PhD projects focus on refugee resettlement regimes and institutional ‘hubs’ of resettlement in Europe and Asia, on strategies of resettlement and on the ways in which DPs took recourse to the available schemes. All four projects, organized in two clusters concentrating on ‘resilience strategies’ as well as on ‘repatriation strategies’, will follow the project’s main research questions and analyse the nature of the transit phase and the factors determining ‘success’ of resettlement, by considering the factors conditioning migration. During the resettlement phase after 1945, refugee lives and survival mechanisms in camps will be studied in detail, as well as their interaction with local authorities, national politics and supranational relief organizations. The projects will consider how the nature of the labour market and availability of financial support in the recipient countries, such as in Europe, Australia, Latin America, and Palestine, crucially and differently influenced how refugees constructed and lived new lives. Refugee resettlement regimes will be analysed through different samples of vulnerable groups (unaccompanied children, disabled DPs). The project sets these findings in relation to the political economies and the political cultures of the countries of resettlement. However, all projects will also discuss the role of white supremacy and the supposed “advantage” of being white within the process of entering host countries and obtaining citizenship. We can detect reluctance, not only in settler community countries as Australia and Canada with their politics on ‘desired ethnicity’, but also in Latin America, to not accept non-white immigrants, Jewish survivors, or Asian/ especially Chinese refugees. All applicants are strongly encouraged to suggest related topics.

We expect a project proposal of 2-4 pages including a project idea, reference to literature and possible sources, as well as a vision on the digital humanities component of such project, together with a letter of motivation (why this project, why Vienna?), CV, pdf of degrees, list of projects and publications (if any).

PhD-project 1 and 2 will research migrants seeking assistance and belonging to vulnerable groups like unaccompanied children, or disabled people. The IRO, at first, tried to repatriate these people, however in many cases this strategy was challenged by the need to resettle them, whereas repatriation failed or was unwanted/impossible due to the political situation in the refugees’ former homelands. The first PhD-project will concentrate on the resettlement of unaccompanied children. The second project will scrutinize mentally or bodily disabled DPs. Children were given special protection in the camps but their resettlement was disproportionately unsuccessful in national resettlement schemes. More often, locally organized and Jewish patronized resettlement or aid schemes as the famous ‘Windermere Children’ (a movie from 2020 telling their fate) helped out. Different strategies surfaced when scrutinizing CM/1 files pertaining to unaccompanied children, making use of a vast trove of child case files in the Arolsen Archives. Cold war divides impeding repatriation to Eastern European countries and interests of Jewish or philanthropic organizations interested in adoption programs caused a shift to resettlement schemes. The PhD project will scrutinize a sample group of unaccompanied children between 8 and 16 and follow their case files as well as their resettlement process, asking for institutional, national and personal strategies to achieve this aim. As evidence indicates, older children were ‘inventing’ families or trying to be adopted by one already having obtained a resettlement destination. Arolsen’s CM/1 files and

additional health centres archives testify how disabled DPs tried to navigate the system by claiming special knowledge to be indispensable for resettlement schemes, thus challenging the notion of being of 'no use' to their new home countries. Contrary to the institutional logic of the system which looks for the 'needy', and national schemes, which rejected them in fear of high costs instead of gain, these strategies testify to resilience as well as agency of these group. The findings will enable us to comprehend the balance between humanitarian politics and national-economic considerations of desired work force and immigration. The two PhD-projects of this cluster will focus on the "unwanted", and not all of them managed to resettle, by scrutinizing the governmental response to humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable survivors who were unable to move on.

The 3rd and 4th PhD-project (concentrating on hubs in Asia and repatriation strategies) will investigate European refugees who sought new lives in Asia. We inquire into the refugees' different ways into resettled lives after the end of the Second World War. The PhDs will for example focus on DP camps in the Philippines, as well as port cities like Shanghai or Hong Kong as places of refuge and transit. They will use institutional documentation as well as exile periodicals and newspapers to scrutinize European refugee lives in Asia and expectations on status and relief. The Philippines were initially a typical transit place, which only gradually developed into a place for resettlement. Shanghai, for example, was a hotspot of Jewish emigration either from Berlin or from Vienna after the 'Anschluss' of Austria in 1938, who then during the Pacific War became trapped there and were unable to move on. After Japanese surrender in 1945, and in the context of the advancing civil war in China, Chiang Kai-Shek had ordered to remove foreigners, and had asked countries like Australia to accept foreign nationals for resettlement, with limited success due to logistic and political obstacles. After the end of the war, it took the UN two years to start resettlement or even repatriation to Europe.

By combining institutional data like UNRRA files and ship lists with periodicals and ego-documents, the expectations on the recovery of lost status and property will be scrutinized. Ship transportation capacities were scarce as evidence from port archives like Trieste, but also UN and Red Cross archives, reveal. While some European refugees returned after 1945 to Europe, others moved on to Palestine, but many were deeply frustrated and asked again for resettlement help in the late 1940s, to start somewhere completely new. Possibly, these projects combine the Red Cross Archives and Arolsen database records on Asian camps (Shanghai, Philippines) with files pertaining to other camps in Europe to detect the returning migrants or those who immediately took off again ('double migrants'). It is also desirable to combine the findings with other archives, for example those pertaining to the Jewish community of Vienna held by the Wiesenthal institute, or the collections on camps of 'hardcore cases' from Hong Kong pertaining to the UNHCR, resettled only in the early 1950s.

Your tasks:

- Writing a doctoral thesis

Your profile:

- Excellent master degree in history (global history or contemporary history)

- Research experience in the field of migration history and contemporary history as well as global or transnational history
- High level of written and oral expression
- Knowledge of English
- Ability to work in a team

The following are also expected

- Attendance of international conferences and presentation of project
- Collaboration in the organisation of conferences, planning of focussed events
- Collaboration in the Social GIS dimension of the project

Documents to be submitted:

- Letter of motivation
- Project Proposal, in German or English (please indicate PhD position in which you are interested)
- Academic curriculum vitae/ CV
- Contact addresses of possible reviewers
- a short vision on how to map and visualize migration flows in this project with digital humanities methods/ GIS

For more information about the advertised position, please contact Erika Stiller-Lanz, erika.stiller@univie.ac.at

Please submit your application by email (pdf of all documents) by **1.12.2022**.

The University of Vienna pursues an anti-discriminatory employment policy and attaches importance to equal opportunities and diversity (<http://diversity.univie.ac.at/>). In particular, it aims to increase the proportion of women in management positions and among academic staff. Women are given priority in the case of equal qualifications.