

Refugees in Global Transit
Encounters, Knowledge, and Coping Strategies in a Disrupted World,
1930s–50s

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Between the rise of fascism in Europe in the 1930s and decolonization after World War II, a range of non-Western, in many cases colonial, regions became hubs for people in transit. A growing body of new research on refugees “[In Global Transit](#),” many of them Jews in flight from Nazi Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe, has highlighted this forced migration to, and in, the Global South. Scholars are documenting refugee encounters with local populations and colonial authorities, their search for more permanent new homes, as well as their attempts to maintain contact with, and facilitate the escape of, those left behind.

This workshop builds on the emerging scholarship on cultural, social, and political encounters – connections and disconnects – among diverse groups of European and non-European refugees and with highly stratified host populations, including existing Jewish communities, colonial officials and settlers, and other migrants. While much of this research has relied on sources produced by state or colonial officials or the refugees themselves, this workshop aims to explore new approaches and sources that require knowledge of local and national languages, archives, and histories.

“Transit” refers to individual and collective experiences of living in-between – that is, in spaces people did not envision remaining in permanently. However, it also refers to regions and countries like Turkey, Palestine, and India, where refugees from Nazi Europe found a safe haven while these regions were themselves undergoing turbulent transitions.

Examining this volatile historical moment raises further questions applicable to other refugee and migrant experiences in crisis: What kinds of knowledge transfer can we observe, and what kinds of boundaries and prejudices obstructed such transfers? What were the differential impacts of class, gender, and age on notions of ethnic, national, “racial,” and religious differences? And how can we uncover the long-term memories of this global diaspora of WWII refugees after

most of them moved beyond their transit spaces in the decades following independence, state building, and – in some cases – new forms of forced migration?

We welcome paper proposals for an international workshop that brings together scholars with an interdisciplinary and cross-epochal approach and are especially interested in exchange with and among scholars in and/or from the Global South. This workshop aims to focus specifically on:

- hospitality, friendship, and enmity
- peaceful and violent encounters, connections, disconnects, and separations
- processes of and obstacles to knowledge transfer and cultural translation
- the formation and perception of diasporas
- memories in and of transit.

The workshop will be held in English. Individual paper presentations are limited to 20 minutes. Proposals for entire panels (up to three papers) are welcome. Proposals, which should include a title, an abstract of no more than 300 words, a CV, and contact information (address, phone, email) must be submitted [ONLINE](#) in one pdf by April 30, 2024. Applicants will be informed about the acceptance of their paper by the end of June 2024.

Accommodation will be arranged and paid for by the workshop organizers. Participants will make their own travel arrangements; funding subsidies for travel are available upon request for selected scholars, especially those who might not otherwise be able to attend the workshop, including junior scholars and scholars from universities with limited resources. Please inform us if you can utilize funds from your home institution to participate in the workshop. There is no registration fee.