

## **First Global Humanitarianism Research Academy (GHRA) 2015**

**Veranstalter:** Fabian Klose / Johannes Paulmann, Leibniz Institute for European History (IEG Mainz), Andrew Thompson, University of Exeter; International Committee of the Red Cross Geneva; German Historical Institute London

**Datum, Ort:** 13.07.2015–24.07.2015, Mainz / Geneva

**Bericht von:** Fabian Klose / Johannes Paulmann, Leibniz Institute for European History (IEG Mainz); Andrew Thompson, University of Exeter

The first Global Humanitarianism Research Academy (GHRA) 2015, organized by FABIAN KLOSE (Leibniz Institute for European History Mainz), JOHANNES PAULMANN (Leibniz Institute for European History Mainz), and ANDREW THOMPSON (University of Exeter) in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and with support by the German Historical Institute London, took place from July 13 to 24, 2015 at the Leibniz Institute of European History in Mainz and the Archives of International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva. The GHRA 2015 had 10 Ph.D. candidates who came from Israel, the Netherlands, the United States, Australia, Canada, Germany, Switzerland, and Denmark. The participants represented a wide range of disciplinary approaches (History, International Law, Media Studies, and Development Studies).

### **First Week:**

On Day One recent research and fundamental concepts of global humanitarianism were critically reviewed. Participants discussed crucial texts on the historiography of humanitarianism and human rights. Themes included the historical emergence of humanitarianism since the eighteenth century and the troubled relationship between humanitarianism, human rights, and humanitarian intervention. Further, twentieth century conjunctures of humanitarian aid and the colonial entanglements of human rights were discussed. Finally, recent scholarship on the genealogies of the politics of humanitarian protection and

human rights since the 1970s was assessed, also with a view on the challenges for the 21st century.

During Day Two, participants presented their own Ph.D. and Postdoc projects while getting constructive collective feedback. These projects showcased the richness and variety of research currently undertaken by a new generation of academics who are set to make a critical contribution to the field. Day Three was reserved for the guest lecture by Professor MICHAEL GEYER (Chicago), who was talking on the topic: „Humanitarianism, Humanitarian Law, and Human Rights: A Difficult Relationship“. The ensuing lively discussion was enriched by the former Head of the ICRC Archives JEAN-LUC BLONDEL (Geneva) who has been an ICRC delegate since 1982 and is a former regional delegate in Buenos Aires and special advisor to the previous ICRC president. During the afternoon, there was also the opportunity for individual tutorials by the GHRA leaders and free study time.

During Day Four & Five the GHRA worked on the „Online Atlas of Humanitarianism and Human Rights“. This is an open access publication by the GHRA participants from successive years. The Online Atlas will consist of an interactive world map displaying approximately 50 locations in Africa, America, Asia, Australia and Europe where significant events took place and shaped the development of humanitarianism and human rights in a crucial way. It will define key terms of both research fields and will display the worldwide entanglement of various places across geographical borders and historical epochs. The Online Atlas addresses a broader public. It is a valuable resource for those engaged in the field of humanitarian action and human rights as well as students and academics.

### **Second Week:**

After the first week of academic training at the Leibniz Institute for European History in Mainz the GHRA 2015 travelled for a week of research training and discussion with ICRC members to the Archives of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva. The First Day at Geneva started with an introduction to the public archives

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and library resources by ICRC staff. JEAN-LUC BLONDEL (Geneva), former Delegate, Head of Division, and currently Adviser to the Department of Communication and Information Management welcomed the group. DANIEL PALMIERI (Geneva), the Historical Research Officer at the ICRC, and FABRIZIO BENSI (Geneva), Archivist, explained the development of the holdings, particularly of the recently opened records from 1966–1975. The Librarian VERONIQUE ZIEGENHAGEN (Geneva) introduced the library with its encompassing publications on International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights, Humanitarian Action, international conflicts and crises. The ICRC also possesses a superb collection of photographs and films which FANIA KHAN MOHAMMAD (Geneva), Photo Archivist, and MARINA MEIER (Geneva), Film Archivist explained. In the afternoon, the GHRA group had the chance to discuss with JACQUES MOREILLON (Geneva), Director General of the ICRC between 1984 and 1988. He gave a presentation on his long experience with special insights into Red Cross prison visits with political detainees. Dr. Moreillon was one of the ICRC delegates to visit Nelson Mandela on Robben Island and shared his vivid memories with the participants. On the Second Day, the participants of the GHRA worked intensively at the archives and library. The staff members assisted them fully in tracing holdings relevant for their individual Ph.D. research. The students discovered the rich material in documents and audio-visual record; some found huge amounts of new material and will certainly return again.

Archival work continued on the Third Day which in the afternoon was spent in discussion with CHARLOTTE LINDSEY-CURTET (Geneva), Director of Communication and Information Management, who produced the topical report on the impact of armed conflict on women „Woman Facing War“ in 2001. She presented the challenges the ICRC faces regarding its relations not only with the wider public and the press but also with the parties to conflicts. In the debate with the GHRA participants, it became clear that the long-term relations which the ICRC establishes in regions of crises makes historical knowledge and research highly relevant to humanitar-

ian action today. The Fourth Day started again with work on individual projects in the archives and continued with a workshop at the University of Geneva. IRÈNE HERRMAN (Geneva), Professor of Transnational Swiss History, delivered a stimulating paper on the „Concepts of Humanitarianism and their Consequences for Academic Research“. The theoretical reflection linked the empirical leg of the GHRA week in Geneva perfectly with the discussion of recent research and fundamental concepts of global humanitarianism during the first week in Mainz. The Fifth Day was dedicated to a concluding discussion of the achievement of the Global Humanitarianism Research Academy 2015 and to further archival reading.

After two intensive and enjoyable weeks in Mainz and Geneva, the GHRA participants sadly had to say good-bye but they will surely stay connected with each other and with the Research Academy. Their next joint project is already in preparation: an Online Atlas of the History of Humanitarianism and Human Rights to be published in the autumn.

The next GHRA 2016 will take place, during its first week, at the Center for Imperial and Global History at the University of Exeter and again at the ICRC in Geneva in the second week. A Call for Application will be published in late September this year on <<http://hr.hypotheses.org/>> and <<http://imperialglobalexeter.com/>>.

#### **Conference Overview:**

##### *GHRA Academic Leaders*

Fabian Klose, Leibniz Institute for European History Mainz

Johannes Paulmann, Leibniz Institute for European History Mainz

Andrew Thompson, University of Exeter

##### *ICRC Geneva*

Fabrizio Bensi (Archivist)

Jean-Luc Blondel (Adviser to the Department of Communication and Information Management)

Charlotte Lindsey-Curtet (Director of Communication and Information Management)

Marina Meier (Film Archivist)

Jacques Moreillon (Director General of the ICRC between 1984 and 1988)

Fania Khan Mohammad (Photo Archivist)

Daniel Palmieri (Historical Research Officer)

Veronique Ziegenhagen (Librarian)

*Guest Lecturers*

Michael Geyer (Chicago): „Humanitarianism, Humanitarian Law, and Human Rights: A Difficult Relationship“

Irène Herrman (Geneva): „Concepts of Humanitarianism and their Consequences for Academic Research“

*GHRA Participants*

Cédric Cotter (Geneva)

Boyd van Dijk (Florence)

Brian Drohan (Chapel Hill)

Jaclyn Granick (Geneva)

Natalia Jevglevskaja (Melbourne)

Sonya de Laat (London, Canada)

Peter Ridder (Cologne)

Tehila Sasson (Berkeley)

Sander Tetteroo (Leiden/Gadjah Mada)

Mie Vestergaard (Roskilde)

Tagungsbericht *First Global Humanitarianism Research Academy (GHRA) 2015*. 13.07.2015–24.07.2015, Mainz / Geneva, in: H-Soz-Kult 21.09.2015.