

Call for Papers

**Migration and Racism in the United States and Germany in the Twentieth Century**

**Conveners:** Maria Alexopoulou (University of Mannheim), Elisabeth Engel (GHI Washington)  
April 23-24, 2020, German Historical Institute Washington DC

Migration and racism are major topics in the histories of Germany and the United States during the twentieth century. The two phenomena occurred in a wide variety of forms, often being shaped and perceived in rather different ways in the German and the American setting. This also holds true for the post-Nazi, the post-colonial, and post-segregationist eras: they did not bring an end to forms of racism that evolved *inter alia* in the numerous ways in which migrants were othered and racialized on both sides of the Atlantic, in Germany (East and West) and the United States.

This workshop invites historians and other scholars of racism and migration to revisit these topics in the context of German and American history in the twentieth century. The workshop aims to focus on the various ways in which migration and racism have shaped each other. By juxtaposing German and American phenomena that reveal how migration and racism were entangled or mutually constitutive, the workshop furthermore seeks to explore transatlantic connections. Analyzing these interlinkages might suggest the extent to which German and American racism and attitudes toward migrants and migration have a common history.

To develop this perspective, the workshop invites papers that explore the shifting intersections and interactions between migration and racism in case studies from the Atlantic arena. In addition, the workshop welcomes papers that offer reflections on how existing scholarship has researched or conceptualized connections between migration and racism. Possible paper topics include, but are not limited to the following themes, and should focus on either Germany or the United States:

- Naming it - racism, *Ausländerfeindlichkeit*, nativism, or xenophobia? Which concept fits which phenomena and to what end?
- Racializing labor migrants – *Braceros* and *Gastarbeiter*
- Ordering and categorizing the population – *race* and statistics
- Perfecting the nation – whiteness, *Volkszugehörigkeit*, and their *Others*
- Improving life – migrants as deviants and a threat to the general social advancement
- Essentializing religion – post-Nazi antisemitism and postcolonial antimuslim racism
- Making un/equality – un/equal laws or dis-equaling practices? Civil rights for immigrants in the United States and Germany
- Blaming each other? – racism as a topic of German-American diplomacy since 1945

- Racializing space/spatializing race – ghettos, barrios, and *Parallelgesellschaften* in the United States and Germany
- Drawing the color line – Immigrants from post-colonial Africa in the United States and Germany
- Producing war refugees – post-Vietnam refugees in the United States and post-Yugoslav refugees in Germany

The workshop hopes to bring together presenters ranging from doctoral students to senior scholars from both sides of the Atlantic. All papers will be pre-circulated in order to prioritize discussion. Ideally, the workshop will also result in a publication of some kind (e.g. edited volume or special issue).

Please submit an abstract of 300 words and a 1-page CV to Susanne Fabricius at [Fabricius@ghi-dc.org](mailto:Fabricius@ghi-dc.org) by June 15, 2019.

Selected participants will receive an individually calculated lump sum to support travel expenses.