Coping with Disappointments: Female Mobility between Expectations and Experiences (17th to 20th Centuries)

May 28–29, 2026

Organisation: Jan Simon Karstens, Eva Seemann and Hannah Tulay (GHIP)

DHIP IHA

It is indisputable that experiences of mobility and migration have been part of the reality of life for many women and girls – not only in recent history. The mobility of women, whether as daughters, wives, or widows, as workers, nuns, entrepreneurs, or activists, was associated not only with gender-specific expectations, but often also with specific experiences that varied depending on factors such as social and geographical origin, status, age, religious, ethnic, and family affiliation. The conference picks up on this and asks how historical actors reflected on, interpreted, and communicated experiences of mobility that contradicted previous expectations.

No registration is required for attending in person.
To participate online, please register using the links below.

28/05:
https://maxweberstiftung.zoom-x.de/meeting/register/L5ZnWrWbRZumPiDcTtUvwQ

29/05:
https://maxweberstiftung.zoom-x.de/meeting/register/-U_k2gVMTP-ZgXQ_NDNq6w

Image credits: Ivan Kramskoi 1883, Portrait of an Unknown Woman, Wikipedia

Thursday, May 28

9.30 Meet & Greet

10.00 **Niels May** (GHIP), Welcome

10.10 **Jan Simon Karstens** (GHIP), Introduction

Panel 1: Early Modern Women on the Move
Chair: **Eva Seemann** (GHIP)

10.45 **Sarah Lentz** (univ. Bremen), Out of Place or Perfectly Seated? Navigating Expectations and Experiences in Female Stagecoach Travel

11.25 Coffee Break

11.55 **Nadine Rüdiger** (univ. Heidelberg/EHESS), Disenchanted Roads. The Electress Sophie of Hanover as a Female Traveller in 17th Century Europe

12.35 **Laura Rehmann** (univ. Vechta), Networks of Support and Opposition. The Migration Experiences of Charlotte Amélie de la Trémoïlle (1652–1732)

13.15 Lunch

Panel 2: Single Women between Hopes and Dependences
Chair: **Niels May** (GHIP)

14.45 **Nere Jone Intxaustegi Jauregi** (univ. of Deusto), Female Servants, Mobility and Broken Marriage Promises in the Early Modern Basque Country

15.25 **Eva Seemann** (GHIP), Managing Expectations, Coping with Disappointments. The State-sponsored Migration of Single Women to New France and Louisiana (c. 1660–1705)

16.05 Coffee Break

16.35 **Séverine Le Loarne-Lemaire** (univ. Nantes), Partir évangéliser les autochtones d'Amérique. Entre déception du rêve d'égalité pour certaines et résilience pour les autres. Le cas des fondatrices de la Province d'Amérique de la RSCJ (1818–1820)

Railey Stonex (univ. St. Andrew, Scottland), Postwar Diplomacy Begins in the Nursery. German-speaking Au Pair Placements in Post-WWII Britain

18.00 Dinner at GHIP

Friday, May 29

Panel 3: Mobile Careers and (Prevented) Opportunities
Chair: **Hannah Tulay** (GHIP)

9.15 **Elias Balat** (Paris), Écrire la déception. L'intime comme espace de résistance et de politisation. Une lecture des écrits d'Emma Herwegh (Paris, 1843–1848)

9.55 **Samantha Wilson** (univ. Cambridge), Policing the Salon. The Gendered Regulation of Cristina Trivulzio di Belgiojosco's Nineteenth-Century Italian Republican Activities in Paris

10.35 Coffee Break

10.55 **Luisa Kapp** (univ. Frankfurt am Main), Invisible Careers in Motion. Women's Scientific Mobility at the Senckenberg Society (c. 1880–1980)

11.35 **Giselle Bernard** (EUI Florence), Queer Feminine Utopias and Colonial Disappointment in Aimée Duc's early Twenthieth Century Writings from India

12.05 **Marie Ruiz** (univ. Picardie), Gérer la déception à distance: Lettres de migrantes et économie émotionnelle des sociétés d'émigration britanniques (1860–1864)

12.45 Lunch

Panel 4: Female Activists
Chair: **Jan Simon Karstens** (GHIP)

13.45 **Rosa Oefinger** (univ. Basel), Between Emancipation Promises and »Technical« Assignments. Women in the Communist Youth International (1920s–1930s)

14.25 **Hannah Tulay** (GHIP), »Co-Operation between East and West ?« Expectations and Disappointments of Egyptian Feminists' Activism within the International Alliance of Women's Suffrage in the 1930s and 1940s

15.05 Coffee Break

15.25 **Ruth Nattermann** (LMU Munich / univ. Leipzig), Disappointments of a Mobile Pacifist. Gertrud Baer at the United Nations in New York

16.05 Closing Discussion

Notes

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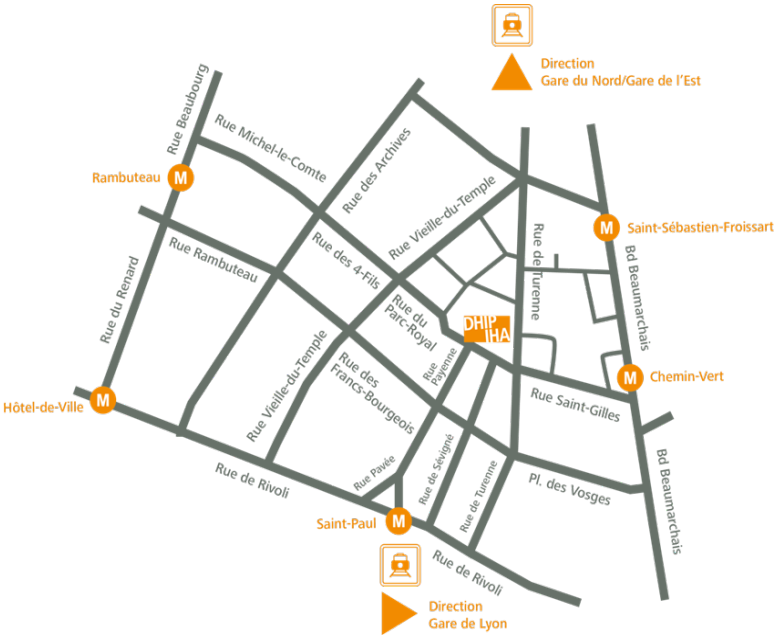

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