

DISPLACEMENT AND REPLACEMENT IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR, 1944-1948

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Please send 1-page abstracts
of proposed papers to
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The European experience of »total war« in the 1940s resulted in enormous population movements as well as shifts in individuals' social relations, allegiances and sense of place and identity. This two-day workshop is part of the *Balzan Project* at Birkbeck College, which looks at reconstruction in post-war Europe. The workshop seeks to illumine the relatively under-explored transition from war to peace by examining the impact of these displacements as well as subsequent replacements of Europeans. It will explore ways in which displacement was experienced in the immediate aftermath of war, and how the displaced were subsequently relocated, reintegrated and absorbed by post-war societies.

On one hand, problems of integration into post-war societies concerned refugees and displaced persons who now found themselves on foreign soil and for whom a return to their pre-war homes and lives was unfeasible. Their post-war experiences were in part shaped by high-level political decisions about their countries, national borders and citizenship. But their reception in new and at times badly disrupted communities was also influenced by their own redefinitions of their professional, political and national identities.

On the other hand, problems of re-adjustment to peace-time life also affected a vast number of people who now did return home – among them demobilised soldiers, POWs, evacuees, partisans and resisters. Groups such as women and adolescents had during the war years taken on new roles which were now being challenged by the return of their husbands and fathers. Their adjustment to peace involved a defence or negotiation of their new positions. For the returning soldiers, in turn, their communities and homes had often changed beyond recognition.

Call for papers for *Balzan Workshop – Displacement and Replacement in the Aftermath of the Second World War, 1944-1948*

While some groups tried to actively shape their post-war situation, many individuals were concerned with more basic problems of how to survive at a time of great material hardship and how to rebuild their personal lives. On a policy level, European states had to devise strategies for reintegrating their own citizens and refugees and for creating social stability. They also attempted to reconstruct state functions regarding education, housing and policing.

The workshop invites papers that examine state strategies for replacement and re-integration. We are also interested in social and cultural explorations of how replacement was experienced by Europeans, how they dealt with the wartime legacy and sought to shape their own futures. One aim of the workshop is to shed light on how the wartime legacy was debated, narrated and managed by states and governing bodies, and how »normality« was recreated. The workshop will adopt a pan-European perspective. We welcome papers on Germany, Western Europe (including the United Kingdom), and Southern Europe. Papers which address the Soviet Union, Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans are also welcome.