

AFR PhD Application Form Annex

PhD Project Description and Ethical Issues Table

To be uploaded as .pdf to the AFR-PhD online submission tool
before the deadline of submission

Deadline: 17 March 2015; 14:00 CET

*Please carefully read the **Guidelines for Applicants** before starting the description of your proposal. Bear in mind that the proposal will be evaluated according to the selection criteria set out in the guidelines. To be successful, the description has to clearly address these criteria.*

*The project description **must use the headings** on page 2. To allow a better reading, please delete the explanations below the headings when you complete the form. The **minimum font size** allowed is **11 points**. The page size is A4, and all **margins** (top, bottom, left, right) should be at least 15 mm (not including any footers or headers). Ensure that the font type chosen is clearly readable (e.g. Arial or Times New Roman).*

*The maximum number of **4 pages** should be respected (excluding cover page, bibliography, list of abbreviations, and ethical issues table); otherwise the FNR may decide to only forward the first 4 pages to the external evaluators.*

Name of PhD Applicant: Anita Lucchesi

Project Title: Shaping a digital memory platform on migration narratives: a public history project on Italian and Portuguese migration memories in Luxembourg

Project acronym: EULBMIG

Project's keywords: Migration, Digital History, Public History, Oral History, Comparative History, Source Criticism.

Public-private partnership: no¹

Name and country of host institution: University of Luxembourg, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Name of PhD Supervisor or scientific contact in HI: Prof. Dr. Andreas Fickers

Name and country of 2nd institution (if applicable): no

Name of PhD Supervisor in 2nd institution (if applicable): no

Envisaged or effective PhD project start: September 01st 2015.

Duration of AFR funding requested: 36 months

¹ Delete as appropriate

AFR PhD Project description

1. Introduction and literature review

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg has experienced large-scale immigration from the end of the 19th century to the present day. From this extraordinary history of migration has emerged a very singular multicultural society, with a population of which more than 40% are foreigners. Among European Union countries, Luxembourg boasts the highest proportion of immigrants amongst its population and officially advertises its pride in being home to over 160 nationalities which cohabit in a ‘harmonious’ way (Hausemer 2008). The ‘success story’ of immigration in Luxembourg (Fetzer 2011) and its particular society – multilingual, multifaceted and majority tolerant – is what motivated the choice of this country as the subject of an innovative research project at the crossroads of migration studies, public history and digital historiography. Its original analytical system will conjugate a cultural history framework – collating oral, digital and public history – to study migration narratives in Luxembourg, followed by a systematical historical comparison of the “mediated memories” (Van Dijck, 2007) of two specific groups of immigrants in the Grand Duchy – the Italian and the Portuguese – also addressing a further comparison throughout their different generations’ narratives. For developing this analysis following the principles of openness and shareability that permeate the digital humanities / history fields, the main purpose of this project is to develop a digital platform, which gathers immigrants’ (mediated) memories, apply digital tools to analyze different bodies of sources, and visualize and present the results to both the academic community and the general public. By using the internet – ‘a new arena for history’ (Danniau 2013) – and by taking a digital and public history approach (Cohen and Rosenzweig 2005; Noiret 2009; Foster 2014) which will make use of the oral history methodology already utilized in migration research (Soldevilla, 1993; White, 1994; Magda, 1997; Thomson, 2002), this PhD project will aim to enhance the historical and cultural dimensions of the existing studies on the subject, especially using oral sources as a way to access the immigrants realities “from inside” (Thompson, 1978). As some from the field already argued, this type of source can give to the historian the conditions to question the established understanding about the immigrants, many times, based only in official registers and stereotypical views (Thomson, 2002).

The story of immigration in the Grand Duchy is connected with the establishment of the country’s autonomy and independence (Hausemer 2008). Furthermore, the Grand Duchy was built up from immigration and, in the recent past, was a nation with borders in dispute that welcomed people from outside as a way to ensure its sovereignty (Arroteia 1983; Hausemer 2008). In such a context, the influence of Italians has been remarkable; they were one of the first groups of immigrants to arrive at the end of the 19th century and were also those who returned soon after the World Wars, helped to rebuild the country and finally made up a big part of the population of the industrial cities in the south (Hausemer 2008; Lentz, 2010; Fetzer 2011). Another important community in Luxembourg is the Portuguese, who lead the great second wave of immigrants who arrived in the 20th century, mainly between 1964 and 1976 (Beirão 1999; Arroteia 2001; Cordeiro 2002), in a period that coincided with high unemployment and an outward-migration movement in Southern Europe (Dustmann and Frattini 2011).

So far I have set out the historical context and factual aspects of the subject of this research. Taking a more epistemological view, it is possible to say that most of the existing studies focused on migration are marked by a traditional approach. This means that the conventional poll and statistics analyses predominate over other forms of inquiry. In the particular case of Luxembourg, many studies use demographic statistics to assess people’s movements and aspects of their lives in the new home country. In this context, Delfina Beirão’s study on the Portuguese of Luxembourg deserves to be singled out in terms of its fieldwork and interviews (1999). However, a general overview can show that studies on immigrant groups in Luxembourg often originate from the fields of social sciences, economics, demographics or even languages (Arroteia 1983, 2001; Cordeiro 2002; Tourbeaux 2012; Ramos 2004; Cicotti 2014). There is only a modest number of historical analyses on the subject, even including interdisciplinary and historical studies that have made important contributions to the contemporary historiography on migration in the space of Luxembourg. To some extent, these studies vary in terms of their choice of methodology (Pauly 1985; Péporté, Kmec, Majerys and Margue 2010; Scuto and Reuter 1995; Scuto and Boesen 2011). As already noticed, the majority of studies available are still deeply marked by ethnic and economic interpretations of the subject, with a remarkable influence of demography in the historiography itself. (Scuto, 2008).

A digital and public history project on migration narratives will represent a significant contribution to the contemporary historiography, adding to the variety and complexity of research methods utilized so far in the study of migration in Luxembourg. This is a worthy and challenging subject to explore and this research project aims to explore it by combining digital public history practices with the classical historical contextualization and source criticism.

Using digital history methods as a tool to build a bridge between personal memories of different generations of Italian and Portuguese immigrants and a public forum for exchange and discussion during the development of the research itself, an original experiment of historical crowdsourcing.

2. Hypothesis and/or Research Objectives

The objectives of this PhD project are twofold: (1) To analyze the migration narratives of first, second and third generation Italian and Portuguese immigrants in Luxembourg from a ‘history from below’ standpoint (Thompson 1963), and performing a historical comparison between them; (2) To investigate, as a self-reflexive practice, the value of a methodology based on digital history and public history procedures, which comprises the use of new methodologies and technological operators to gather, criticize, and present historical sources. The result will be the creation of a collective, digital storytelling of migration in Luxembourg. In this way the back-end history will be complemented by the front-end storytelling by immigrants.

The core hypotheses of this project are that digital tools (such as “text mining software” (e.g. [MALLET](#) or [VOYANT](#)) and audio/visual analysis (e.g. [Viewshare](#), [Oral History Metadata Synchronizer](#)), combined with a historical comparison of the different generations of Italians and Portuguese in Luxembourg will allow to identify specific narrative patterns within the generation specific migration memories. These generation specific narratives will then be compared to each other in order to describe and analyze complex processes of ‘transgenerational transmission of the past’ and the ‘interchangeability of their generational position’ (Saloul 2009); Secondary assumptions are that sharing authority with the Italians and Portuguese, using historical crowdsourcing and the immigrants’ own first-hand accounts and representations of their own past on the web, will permit to compare “classical” analogue narrative sources with new forms of digital self-representation on the Web. Such a dual approach will allow to investigate the democratic potential of the Internet as a “participatory” space of memory production (Assmann, 1995; Rosenzweig and Thelen, 2000; Van Dijck, 2007; Hamilton and Shopes 2008, Assmann, 2008). Such a research can contribute towards bringing new keys for interpreting society’s contradictions and singularities, understanding ‘History from Below’ in a collective construction of knowledge.

Therefore, this project will look at Italian and Portuguese immigrants’ narratives going through their third to their first generation, in order to listen and contrast their narratives and the diverse layers of interpretation of their own family migration, searching for their own meanings of being in Luxembourg, rather than focus on the emigration policy aspects or on the implementation procedures and the consequences of these for the host country or country of origin. For these policy issues, the project will consider the ongoing research of Thierry Hinger (2014). It will also be a valuable opportunity to collaborate with other scholars from the same university, whose works address diverse aspects of migration, as Denis Scuto, Elisabeth Boesen, Michel Pauly and Paul Cicotti.

3. Innovation/originality + Expected Outcomes

First, it is worth pointing out the originality of the methodology and the theoretical framework that will support this research, which will follow the perspective of the “History from Below”, and will be systematically based on new approaches in the field of digital and public history. Even separately, both digital and public history approaches are still uncommon for such studies as this. However, alongside an oral history methodology and articulated with a historical comparison, this approach represents a truly original analytical system (Lucchesi 2014b). Such approach that might consider the context of our present time (Bedaridá, 2001), in which society seems to experiment an “inflation of memory” (Huysen, 2000), permeated by the profusion of testimonies and many other types of remembrance dispersed all around, included on the web. Thus, taking the technology as the interface that enable to approximate the oral history, to the digital and public history in the present, this project must have a test and play performance that may allow me to verify if history can be made through digital venues in a way that it would never be possible only through analog means. In the Digital History Laboratory of the University of Luxembourg, this research will provide an excellent opportunity for observing how the interface between choice of methodology and technology’s requirements works, and whether this interaction may enable different insights or envisage new pedagogies or epistemologies. Thus this research can help to question the ‘disciplinary inertia’ (Hartog 2010) of the field of History before the Digital Turn of the last 20 years and glimpse what might be the effects and co-effects in traditional historiographical operation (Certeau 1988) if historians embrace digital technologies.

A second innovation of this PhD project, in the mid-term, is the promotion of community engagement in the development of the research itself. The aim is to do that by involving the ‘community’ in its wider concept, including both scholars and the public at large in the dissemination of knowledge not only at the end of the project, but throughout its duration and many stages. This is fundamental to a project that stands for an open and collaborative

design of scholarship, really oriented by the principle of sharing authority (Shopes 2003; Thomson 2003), which is also a key concept for oral history and public history, equally essential for the Digital Humanities (Arthur and Bode 2014).

At this point, I might state that I am a half-Brazilian, half-Italian citizen, fluent in Portuguese and Italian, which will facilitate my contact with both immigrant communities. Moreover, I have been writing a blog on Digital History since 2008 ([Historiografia na Rede](#)), through which I have become familiar with the many issues inherent in blogging activity and content manager interfaces. Furthermore, since December 2013 I have been the public historian responsible for running the [@Rio450](#) project on Instagram, a crowdsourcing project of the City Council of Rio de Janeiro for the commemoration of its 450th anniversary and a project that has engaged with an extraordinary number and range of the community.² I strongly believe that all of these experiences, in addition to my own Master's research (Lucchesi 2014a) and teaching activities, will contribute immensely to my future studies.³

Concerning the expected outcomes of this research project, at the beginning of the second year of research it should be possible to start publishing early pieces on a website set up for the project, a sort of 'grey literature' based on the research experience in progress (see the Work Plan below). Weekly 'blog posts', following Daniel Cohen's *blessay* model, will be published on the project's own digital board. These may be useful sources for researchers interested in migration or in the project theoretical framework. Finally, by the end of the third year of research, beyond the traditional thesis, this research will: (1) have given rise to about one hundred informal posts; (2) have produced at least two first-author peer-reviewed articles (one in the 2nd, one in the 3rd year); and (3) have been presented at least three high-profile academic events (one per year).

4. Methodology

In order to analyze the different migration narratives and assess the immigrants' mediated memories, a number of methodologies will be used, starting with oral history interviews and passing through the analysis of traditional and digital-born sources by using new tools. However, the use of such technologies and tools for data analysis, does not mean that the historian's traditional interpretations and hermeneutics is going to be replaced by a computational work (Zaagsma, 2013; McGann 2014). Indeed, what this project must attempt is the integration of both distant / close reading; human / computational reading, playing around in this hybrid zone between traditional and digital scholarship (Zaagsma, 2013:22). The research will make use of three different sources of information: (1) the first-hand accounts of and/or interviews with Italian and Portuguese community members – these will be collected and interpreted according to oral history fieldwork methods; (2) the online presence and self-image (ego-documents) of these immigrants⁴ – these will be mapped, scanned, and analyzed by processing the data collection through digital applications (for example, text-mining and data visualization tools); (3) In order to contrast the highly "subjective" narratives on migration to Luxembourg with more "objective" accounts, the project will finally also look at European statistics available for Luxembourg (for example, Statec, Eurostat, Eurobarometer and European Social Survey). All the data will be analyzed by procedures that combine both traditional and digital approaches. The data will be gathered and treated through digital tools as well as those mentioned earlier, and this must enable the test of different technology inputs in the historiographical operation.⁵ I believe that the experimentation with such toolkit will enable me to find an equilibrium between close and distant reading practices, attempting to adjust the focus of my analysis according to the circumstances and characteristics of my object, closer to the idea of Martin Mueller's "scalable reading" (2013). Moreover, as part of the digital and public history framework of this project, a historical crowdsourcing will be developed by opening a digital channel to communicate with the community: the 'digital memory platform' as stated in the title of this research project (for which [Omeka](#) can be a worth base content management system).⁶

² A comment on my presentation of @Rio450 as a digital public history case in the last International Federation for Public History conference, in October 2014, can be found here: <http://publichistory.humanities.uva.nl/blog/new-media-tools-brazilian-perspective/>

³ I am also a member of the research group, Group of Contemporary Studies ([Grupo de Estudos do Tempo Presente](#)), from [Universidade Federal de Sergipe](#) (Brazil). In this group, I co-led a research project, entitled 'Digital Intolerance and the Extreme Right on the Internet – 1999–2009' (Maynard et al 2012), in which diverse digital tools were used to deal with the digital-born sources of the research corpus.

⁴ Such as the portal of the [Confederação da Comunidade Portuguesa no Luxemburgo](#) or the Facebook group [Portugueses no Luxemburgo](#), which has over 17 000 members so far.

⁵ Digital tools and software such as [Zotero](#), [Mendeley](#) (bibliography and resource management), [MALLET](#), [VOYANT](#), [Paper Machines](#), [GATE](#) (text-mining), [Viewshare](#), [Walrus](#), [Ngram Viewer](#) (visualisation), [Pliny](#) or [Prism](#) (annotation and note managers) can be used to process data. Concerning the use of orally expressed memories, a valid experiment may be the use of the [Oral History Metadata Synchronizer](#).

⁶ It is useful to note that examples of oral history archives on migration such as the [Migration Narratives, Lebenswege I Das Migrationsmuseum Rheinland-Pfalz im Internet](#) and the [Dokumentationszentrum und Museum über die Migration in Deutschland](#)

Through this website, from the second year of the PhD onward, the community will be involved not only as passive observers, but also as collaborators. This live writing experience will allow people from both outside and inside the University to get in touch, to find out about, to read, to listen, to share, to comment on and to contribute to the ongoing investigation.⁷ This digital channel will be a window for the public, a place to share the first findings and impressions of the research through digital publication, as mentioned in the previous section, including a parcel of sources (that is, excerpts of interviews, data reports, literature reviews, tool reviews). This *shareability* is pivotal for any digital public history project (Thomson 2003; Noiret, 2009, 2012; Hamilton and Shopes 2008). New media platforms can be exploited in order to transcend the simple text as the only format of historical source and historical scholarship (Cohen and Rosenzweig 2005; Zaagsma 2013; Foster 2014; Zahavi 2014). Considering the particularity of the spoken word, which can easily be ‘mutilated’ when written and transposed to a printed page, the possibility of work with audiovisual narratives is an exciting one for this project (Gluck 2014).

In order to scrutinize the epistemology inherent in the writing of history in the digital age, the project will follow a strong experimentation path. Applying cross-references of analog and digital data, making use of textual analyses with text-mining techniques and playing with digitized metrics, collaborative annotation and visualization tools will necessarily allow it to test the usability of the new complex toolkit for historians in the digital age. However, in contrast to many studies recently undertaken by digital humanities researchers, it will not be only an introspective and auto-reflexive analysis (Bode and Arthur 2014); it will wrestle with a historical empirical problem and develop a systematic exploration of it. Recent studies argue that digital humanities seems to have contributed only a few studies of real significance due to an overriding concern with definition, instead of an involved *praxis* towards a palpable human subject (Bode and Arthur 2014), such as migration. The dilemma seems to be ‘the inability to move from data (or textual and models visualization) to arguments and interpretations that contribute to knowledge and debates in broader humanities’ (Bode and Arthur 2014). This project wants to move in this direction. The analytical system proposed here will allow the project not only to pursue its practical objectives, but also to contribute effectively to the debate on historical hermeneutics and source critique that nowadays engenders impasses for digital history and the humanities at large (Minuti 2002; Ragazzini 2004; Fickers 2012; Lucchesi 2014a; McGann 2014; McCarty 2014).

5. Work plan

	2015		2016				2017				2018		
	Sep	Nov–Dec	Jan–Mar	Apr–Jun	Jul–Sep	Nov–Dec	Jan–Mar	Apr–Jun	Jul–Sep	Nov–Dec	Jan–Mar	Apr–Jun	Jul–Sep
Training													
Reading													
Identifying sources													
Preparing fieldwork													
Fieldwork													
Analysis of sources													
Launch site													
Conferences													
Article submissions													
PhD Transfer													
Writing-up													
Submission													

[e.V.](#) maybe be of help for our platform shaping. As well as other cases of storytelling and online platforms for sharing testimonies and personal accounts, such as [Her Stories](#), [Memoro](#) and [Museu da Pessoa](#) are inspiring initiatives.

⁷ Another ‘live writing’ experience, for instance, is ‘The Historian’s Macroscopic’ launched in September 2013 by Shawn Graham (Carleton University), Ian Milligan (University of Waterloo) and Scott Weingart (Indiana University). See: <http://themacroscopic.org>

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ETHICAL ISSUES TABLE

(Note: Research involving activities marked with an asterisk * in the left column in the table below will be referred automatically to Ethics Review)

Research on Human Embryo/Foetus		Yes	Page
	Does the proposed research involve human Embryos?		
	Does the proposed research involve human Foetal Tissues/ Cells?		
	Does the proposed research involve human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)?		
	Does the proposed research on human Embryonic Stem Cells involve cells in culture?		
	Does the proposed research on Human Embryonic Stem Cells involve the derivation of cells from Embryos?		
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL	X	
Research on Humans		Yes	Page
*	Does the proposed research involve children?		
*	Does the proposed research involve patients?		
*	Does the proposed research involve persons not able to give consent?		
*	Does the proposed research involve adult healthy volunteers?		
*	Does the proposed research involve Human genetic material?		
*	Does the proposed research involve Human biological samples?		
*	Does the proposed research involve Human data collection?		
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL	X	
Privacy		Yes	Page
*	Does the proposed research involve processing of genetic information or personal data (e.g. health, sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, political opinion, religious or philosophical conviction)?	Yes	8
*	Does the proposed research involve tracking the location or observation of people?	Yes	8
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL		
Research on Animals		Yes	Page
*	Does the proposed research involve research on animals?		
*	Are those animals transgenic small laboratory animals?		
*	Are those animals transgenic farm animals?		
	Are those animals non-human primates?		
*	Are those animals cloned farm animals?		
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL	X	
Research on Animals		Yes	Page
*	Does the proposed research involve the use of local resources (genetic, animal, plant, etc)?		
*	Is the proposed research of benefit to local communities (e.g. capacity building, access to healthcare, education, etc)?		
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL	X	
Dual Use		Yes	Page
*	Research having direct military use		
*	Research having the potential for terrorist abuse		
	I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL	X	