

# Fellows

## **Tim Rütten**

IFK\_Junior Fellow

Duration of fellowship

01. October 2020 bis 30. June 2021

## **Contact**

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# Tim Rütten

## **PROJECT TITLE**

Maids, Powers, and Morals: Forms and Fictions in the Discourse on Maidservants (1500–1810)

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Beginning with late medieval and Reformation statements about domestic service, this project examines, first, how a discourse about maids formed and, second, which fracture lines emerged in its transformation to a mono-gendered articulation. The discourse on maidservants proves to be a subsidiary of “the woman question.” The discourse, concerned primarily with the marriageability of young, foreign women, positioned maids as the other of housewives/housemothers. Maids were moreover used as an element in establishing general definitions of femininity. Understood as a collective symbol, maidservants were screens onto which social problems could be projected, observed, and converted into solutions. The texts this research examines explored and provided answers to questions of poverty, migration, and obstacles to marriage. The project seeks not to

minimize the diversity of sources in favor of a stringent development, but rather to reveal and thematize the variability, the interplay, and the contradictions of the knowledge itself. It aims to show how normative attributions are negotiated, while also pointing up their fragility.

## CV

Tim Rütten studied German philology, history and philosophy in Cologne and Paris. After completing his master's degree, he worked as a pre-doc with a focus on modern women's and gender history in the Department of History at the University of Vienna (2015–20). His dissertation project, *Maids, Powers, and Morals: Forms and Fictions in the Discourse on Maidservants*, uses intersectional discourse analysis to examine how societies deal with both single women and with strangers. His additional research interests include the history of emotions, gender relations in the nineteenth century, and the history of science.

## Publications

gem. mit Jessica Richter, „[S]ie war männersüchtig, vergnügungssüchtig, unrein, faul ,bis zum Exceß' [...].' Wandel und Kontinuität im häuslichen Dienst im 19. Jahrhundert“, in: Elisabeth Loinig, Oliver Kühschelm, Willibald Rosner, Stefan Eminger (Hg.), *Niederösterreich im 19. Jahrhundert 2*, [im Erscheinen 2020]; gem. mit Theresa Adamski, Doreen Blake, Veronika Duma, Veronika Helfert, Michaela Neuwirth, Waltraud Schütz (Hg.), *Geschlechtergeschichten vom Genuss. Zum 60. Geburtstag von Gabriella Hauch*, Wien 2019; „Wahnsinn aus Heimweh im langen 19. Jahrhundert. Dienstmägde zwischen Normalisierung, Disziplinierung und Delinquenz“, in: Alexia Bumbaris, Veronika Helfert, Jessica Richter, Brigitte Semanek, Karolina Sigmund (Hg.), *Frauen- und Geschlechtergeschichte un/diszipliniert?, Aktuelle Beiträge aus der jungen Forschung (= Studien zur Frauen- und Geschlechtergeschichte 11)*, Linz 2016.