

Kristine Midtgaard, associate professor, (University of Southern Denmark):

“Bodil Begtrup – woman in a world society. Positioning in an emerging field of international political rights”

Bodil Begtrup (1903-87) was a Danish activist and diplomat during the interwar years and until the 1980s. She was multi-positioned in various multilateral, bilateral and national institutions: the League of Nations, the UN and the Council of Europe. She was Denmark's first female ambassador – to Iceland, Switzerland and Portugal, and she was Head of Office in the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Her primary interest was women's rights. In Denmark she was actively engaged in women's and children's conditions, notably in the Danish Women's National Council. The purpose of the project is to take Begtrup as a starting point for analysing transnational processes and networks in the emerging international political rights field after 1945. How did one agent enter and position herself in this field? Which ideas and interest did she promote, and how? What was her perception of the field over time? What impact did a 'national interest' have on the degree and the ways in which Begtrup could act freely to promote certain ideas and policies? How and by which factors and agents can 'transnational processes' be defined?