

Newsletter N. 9: Amsterdam Report, ELHN Conference Update and Future Plans

Dear members of the ELHN Working Group “Free and Unfree Labour”,

last September, about 25 members of our working group met from all over Europe and from Brazil (!) in **Amsterdam** for a very lively and inspiring debate on the conceptualisation of unfree labour relations through time and space. It was great to feel how much this group is actually alive and full of ideas and projects for the future. The idea to meet for an open reflexion on the basis of a handful conceptual articles pre-circulated beforehand (instead of classical conference paper presentations) proved to be a very intense form of mutual exchange, and we are definitely going to repeat this in the future! For the discussion’s results please read the wonderful and extensive **report written by Johan Lund Heinsen**. Thanks a lot for your work, Johan!

Preparations for the **2<sup>nd</sup> ELHN Conference** are now going full speed. The conference will take place in **November, 2–4, 2017, in Paris**, and we are proud to tell you that both our sessions (one on “new approaches to the free/unfree labour question”, the other on “moments – or degrees – of coercion”) as well as the joint session the “Military labour” working group have been accepted for the conference. The book boxing will either take place as a general activity of the network or within our working group’s programme. We’ll have the definite decision from the conference committee in late February. You may find the preliminary programme of our working group attached to this e-mail.

In addition to that there will also be space for an internal group meeting and our future planning. Let us announce you already that during that internal working group meeting at the ELHN Conference in Paris we are going to elect **two new candidates for the working group’s coordination team**. We, that means Christian G. De Vito, Matthias van Rossum, Jesús Agua de la Roza and Juliane Schiel, are coordinating this group since summer 2014 and very much enjoy this work but we also want to make space for two other people and other ideas in order to strengthen the bottom-up and non-hierarchical spirit of the network. If you are interested in becoming a member of the coordinating team and you need further information on this work, please don’t hesitate to contact us.

We are happy to tell you that the board of the “**Annales**” has accepted a **special issue on “shifts in labour relations”** which will be edited by Christian De Vito, Matthias van Rossum and Juliane Schiel and is going to include eight contributions from members of our group. The issue is hopefully going to be published by the end of 2017, in English and French.

As you may already know, **the next European Social Science History Conference (ESSHC) will take place in April, 4–7, 2018, in Belfast**. The “Labour Network” of the ESSHC has already launched a CfP for this conference, and as you may notice there is an explicit emphasis on the free/unfree issue in the call. Our working group may again submit some session proposals for the ESSHC (as we did for Valencia last year), but we warmly invite you to directly propose sessions or individual papers and eventually inform us. You may find the CfP attached to this e-mail or follow this link:

<https://esshc.socialhistory.org/networks/labour>. Please feel free also to circulate the call through your networks. Many thanks!

Furthermore, just a brief announcement as a follow-up from Amsterdam: We are planning a 2<sup>nd</sup> **informal workshop** as we had in Amsterdam this autumn for **summer 2018 at the International Research Center** in Berlin (<https://rework.hu-berlin.de/de/aktuelles.html>). Details will follow next summer.

...and finally a **short list of upcoming events**:

- 3–6 May 2017, La Paz: International Congress on “Work and Labourers – Past and Present” (see CfP in attachment)
- 15–17 June 2017, Bremen: Negotiating Status and Scope of Action – Interrelations between Slavery and Other Forms of Dependency in Early Modern Europe (see CfP in attachment)

For the time being, however, we wish you all a wonderful Christmas and all the best for 2017!

Best wishes,

Juliane Schiel, Christian G. De Vito, Matthias van Rossum, Jesùs Agua de la Roza