

4 May 2018

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

Today, we would like to inform you about two upcoming events.

1. Joint Meeting of the Free/Unfree Labour and the Military Labour Working Group: 7–9 November 2018, Berlin

As you already know, we will meet for a second working group meeting, and this time, the meeting will be hosted by the International Research Center Re:Work at Berlin. Like the first time in Amsterdam in 2016, the meeting is no classical conference with sessions and paper presentations but accounts for the want articulated by the group members to move forward content-wise as a group. It takes up two ideas that were discussed during the Paris conference last November: the suggestions to compare (a) “sites and fields of coercion” and (b) “semantics and taxonomies of social dependency” across time and space. Besides this, we are all invited to participate in the workshop day organised by the ELHN Military Labour Working Group, preceding our own meeting. As there has always been much exchange and common interest among the members of the two working groups, it is a great opportunity to strengthen this cooperation. A preliminary program of all three workshop days can be found at the end of this newsletter.

Our own workshop will start on November 8, with a follow-up discussion on Christian De Vito’s suggestion to study not only moments and degrees of coercion but to set “sites of coercion” as a starting point for diachronic and transregional comparison. Focusing on a particular site such as the household, the field, the factory, the school, the workhouse, the prison, the military, the shipyard, the building site etc. may open new possibilities for labour history transgressing traditional disciplinary boundaries historical epochs and geographical areas. At the same time, the discussion will address ways by which we can analyze and compare individual sites as part of broader “fields of coercion”, for example by studying a whole economic sector (including the military), one region, one commodity chain, one migration route or network, and the multiple productive sites of a single company. We will start our workshop with a common reading of two or three methodological articles pre-circulated beforehand before we put that concept to the test by exchanging and comparing case studies on particular “sites of coercion” across time and space. All those who would like to contribute to that empirical collection of cases, are invited to send an e-mail to: christian.devito@gmail.com by June 30.

The other day (November 9) will be dedicated to the idea presented by Juliane Schiel to think of a collaborative handbook assembling micro-semantic case studies on the figure of “maids-of-all-work” in different settings, regions and epochs. Instead of operating with analytical categories (“slave”, “serf”, “convict” etc.) and dichotomies (free vs. unfree, slave labour vs. wage labour) stemming from post-1789 experiences and discourses in Europe, this endeavor takes inventory of the variety of words, expressions and phrases used by the historical actors to articulate and define the social position of the “maids-of-all-work” in a specific time, place and context and seeks to deduce the prevailing (or concurring) taxonomies of social dependency of a certain period or region. It is meant to be a collaborative and dynamic online publication

combining empirical case studies with digital methods of textmining, clustering and mapping. Here again, we will start that day by a methodological reflection of the project and will then collect and discuss empirical material for the handbook's articles. Two programmatic articles and a questionnaire for potential empirical entries will be circulated beforehand. Those who would like to contribute to this discussion by presenting the semantic field of a particular type of "maids-of-all-work" and explaining the social taxonomy of their specific language and context of study, please send an e-mail to: juliane.schiel@hist.uzh.ch by June 30.

At the end of this gathering in Berlin, we would like to take the time for a general discussion on ideas for future projects of working group members and on new topics and initiatives or new directions to break out.

For all those who can join the meeting of the Military Labour Working Group on November 7, in Berlin, please note that they are planning to divide their workshop day into two parts: a first one will be destined to paper presentations possibly dealing with "who are the military workers?", "free and unfree military labour" or "gendering military labour" while the second part will be devoted to the discussion of a pre-circulated working paper of the group on basic theoretic concepts to be developed. In case you would like to make a contribution to those topics, please let us know or send an e-mail directly to the coordinators of that group, fia.sundevall@ekohist.su.se or giulio.ongaro@univr.it, before May 31.

2. ELHN Conference: 19–21 September 2019, Amsterdam

The third conference of the European Labour History Network will take place from 19 to 21 September 2019 in Amsterdam. As in Turin and Paris, this network conference functions as a platform for existing working groups to meet and exchange and as an opportunity for new initiatives to create their own working groups and develop projects and ideas for a new labour history. The coordinators of the working groups are asked to submit session proposals by October 1. We are allowed to suggest up to four sessions organized by our group. The sessions, which can also be held in collaboration with other working groups, are open to different formats, but for conventional sessions one could aim at four papers per session (but no less than three).

If anyone would like to suggest an idea for a session he/she would like to organize or a paper he/she would like to present, please **send us your thoughts by June 30** so that we can put together a preliminary program we can suggest to the organizational board of the ELHN conference.

Last but not least, we would like to draw your attention to the following conferences, calls and open positions:

- Seminar on “Co-existence and interaction between free and unfree labour: The workers' perspective”, 20–22 September 2018 at the University of Turin. Convened by the “Free and Unfree Labour” working group of the Italian Society for Labour History (SISLAv). Final programme due for publication in May 2018 on the website: www.storialavoro.it; Contact: seminariosislav@gmail.com
- Call for Papers: Conference on “Towards a Global History of Primitive Accumulation”, 9–11 May 2019 in Amsterdam, deadline: 1 July 2018 (see pdf)
- PhD scholarship in the history of prisons and punishment at the University of Aalborg (Denmark), deadline: 15 May 2018 ()
- 2 PhD positions on “Punishment, Labour, Dependency” at the University of Bonn (Germany), deadline: 20 July 2018 (see pdf)
- 2 PhD positions on “Dependency, Gender and Labour in the Household” at the University of Bonn (Germany), deadline: 20 July 2018 (see pdf)
- 2 PhD positions on “Beyond Slavery. Dependency in Asian History” (Germany), deadline: 20 July 2018 (see pdf)

If you know of other conferences, calls or positions that might be of interest for the group, please don't hesitate to indicate them to us so that we can integrate them in the next newsletter to be circulated in June or July.

Best wishes,

Jeannine Bischoff, Christian G. De Vito, Johan Lund Heinsen and Juliane Schiel.

Joint Meeting of the Military Labour and the Free/Unfree Labour Working Groups
7–9 November 2018, Re:Work, Georgenstrasse 23, 10099 Berlin (6th Floor)
Preliminary Program

7 November 2018: Military Labour (small seminar room)

10:00 – 12:00 am: who are the military workers?

Paper presentations

2:00 – 3:00 pm: free and unfree military labour

Paper presentations

3:00 – 4:00 pm: gendering military labour

Paper presentations

4:30 – 6:30 pm: concepts and methodology

Discussion of a pre-circulated working paper

8 November 2018: Sites and Fields of Coercion (big seminar room)

10:00 – 12:00 am: concept and methodology (chair: Jeannine Bischoff)

Short presentation (Christian De Vito) and methodological discussion of the conceptual approach on the basis of two pre-circulated articles

2:00 – 4:00 pm: “sites of coercion” (chair: Giulia Bonazza)

Short inputs by working group members

4:30 – 6:30 pm: “fields of coercion” (chair: Christian De Vito)

Short inputs by working group members

7:00 pm: joint cooking and dinner at re:work

9 November 2018: Semantics and Taxonomies of Social Dependency (big seminar room)

10:00 – 12:00 am: concept and methodology (chair: Johan Lund Heinsen)

Short presentation (Juliane Schiel) and methodological discussion of the handbook idea on the basis of two pre-circulated articles

1:45 – 3.30 pm: “maids-of-all-work” in European languages (chair: Claude Chévaleyre)

Short inputs by working group members

3:45 – 5:30 pm: “maids-of-all-work” in non-European languages (chair: Juliane Schiel)

Short inputs by working group members

5:45 – 7:30 pm: Quo vadis, Free/Unfree Labour?