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SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

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Left-Wing Women's Organizing and Activism in the Twentieth Century

Call for Papers

VENUE

Sapienza Università di Roma, Rome, Italy

ORGANIZERS

Daria Dyakonova, Sapienza University, Rome, Italy

✉ ddyakonova@iun.ch

Minja Bujakovic, European University Institute (EUI), Florence, Italy

✉ Minja.Bujakovic@eui.eu

KEY-NOTE SPEAKERS

Chiara Bonfiglioli, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy

Zsófia Lóránd, University of Vienna, Austria

DESCRIPTION

We are pleased to announce a call for papers for an upcoming conference titled "Left-Wing Women's Organizing and Activism in the Twentieth Century." This conference seeks to bring together scholars from different disciplines working on various aspects of the history of women's activism and organizing. It aims to explore how women across the spectrum of left-wing politics shaped and influenced the twentieth century's political, social, and cultural landscapes. The conference aspires to assess the contribution of left-wing women's activists to the general struggle for women's emancipation using intersectional, postcolonial, and critical-feminist approaches, acknowledging the pluralities in forms and methods of organizing.

The twentieth century witnessed a surge of diverse forms of women's activism and the proliferation of women's organizations on both national and international levels. Consequently, women fought against multiple forms of oppression and for various, yet interconnected, causes across different contexts. Influenced by significant historical moments such as WWI, the fall of empires, the emergence of nation-states, and the success of the October Revolution, women relied on the frameworks of fast-developing left-wing politics to fight for different forms of emancipation. This same framework allowed them to organize within anticolonial and anti-imperial movements and to engage in black liberation struggles later in the century. In this way, they moved across the political spectrum of left-wing politics, which we hope to explore during this conference.

Despite the notable engagement of women activists across the globe, the historiography of twentieth-century left-wing politics has been notably androcentric, often neglecting the significant contributions women made. For decades, studies on left-wing women's activism in the twentieth century remained limited, often sidelined by Cold War historiography. Furthermore, dismissive attitudes towards left-wing women activists persisted, excluding them from the narratives on the waves of feminism and feminist practices. However, historians have begun to challenge this perspective, striving to illuminate the efforts of women activists within left-wing politics. This conference joins them in this endeavor, fostering discussions on the varied currents and practices of left-wing women's activism.

We encourage prospective participants from various disciplines to submit paper proposals that will tackle twentieth-century left-wing women's struggles, ideas, and activism through a broad perspective focusing on intersectionality rather than exclusively on gender. Moreover, we strive to go beyond the discussion of the "unhappy marriage of Marxism and feminism" or the "feminist-communist debate." We advocate exploring different forms and frameworks of women's activism, collaboration, and/or antagonism. We propose exploring continuities and discontinuities within left-wing currents throughout the twentieth century. Lastly, we urge moving away from Western-centric perspectives, looking into the broader history of women's activism.

THEMES AND TOPICS

We invite paper proposals on a wide range of topics related to left-wing women's activism and organising in the twentieth century, including but not limited to:

- Intersectionality and the Left-Wing Women's Activism
- Left-Wing Women's Grassroots Organizing
- Queer Left-Wing Movements and Activists
- Political Participation and Leadership of Women in Left-Wing Movements
- Women's Roles and Experiences in the Socialist States and Left-wing Parties
- Left-Wing Women's Ideas and Writing
- Collaborations and/ or Antagonisms among Women Activists across the Political Spectrum

- Addressing and Combating Sexism within and Outside Political Parties and Social Movements
- State and Societal Repression of Left-Wing Women's Activism
- The Role of Women in Labor Movements and Trade Unions
- The Influence of Left-Wing Women on Social Policy and Legislation

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

We welcome proposals for individual or co-authored papers, as well as panel proposals. To submit a proposal, please send the following information to LWWAOC@outlook.com by **November 1, 2024**:

1. Title of the paper / Panel
2. Paper Abstract (300 words)
3. Short biography (100-150 words), including affiliation and contact information for each presenter
4. Statement on the need of financial assistance, if needed

IMPORTANT DATES

- Submission Deadline: **November 1, 2024**
- Notification of Acceptance: **December 1, 2024**
- Conference Dates: **February 20-21, 2025**

FUNDING

We encourage researchers to seek funding through their respective institutions. We offer limited financial support to graduate students for travel and accommodation, especially those outside the EU.

PAPER PUBLICATION

Selected papers from the conference will be considered for publication. Further details regarding the publication process, including submission guidelines and deadlines, will be announced in the near future. Stay tuned for updates on this exciting opportunity to contribute to the academic discourse on left-wing women's organizing and activism in the twentieth century.