

Call for Applications

International Summer Academy

“Labour, Rights, and Mobility”

29 October – 5 November 2017, Buenos Aires, Argentina

The international research centre Work and Human Lifecycle in Global History (re:work) at Humboldt University Berlin and the Universidad Nacional de San Martín in Buenos Aires will hold a Summer Academy exploring the historical and contemporary connections between labour, mobility and rights in a global perspective. The Summer Academy is open for doctoral students working in the field of work/labour from historical as well as other social sciences’ perspectives and will take place on the campus of the Universidad Nacional de San Martín, 29 October to 5 November 2017.

The study of labour rights can be traced back in history for a long period, but these rights acquired a new significance with the emergence of the modern labour movement and the rise of industrial capital in the 19th and 20th century. Colonial and post-colonial historiographies have continuously challenged an industry-centric Western master narrative of the struggle for labour rights and labour standards. In global labour history especially perspectives from the “Global South” crucially contribute to the reconsideration and redefinition of notions of rights and work itself.

The Summer Academy aims to meet the challenges of a broader discussion on the connections of labour and rights, avoiding Eurocentric approaches. It allows for studies that shed light on multiple forms of work and social conflict, including non-wage labour, as well as on the multiple historical connections between forms of social and political organization and shared perceptions of justice and injustice.

This approach also puts into question traditional narratives of state intervention on labour relations and labour legislation. How does the law actually work in daily life? When and how did it work as an arena of class struggle, as put by E. P. Thompson? Moreover, it sheds light on



other forms of regulations and norms that were not originally intended to ensure labour rights, but were used by workers in this way. Sometimes laws and discussions about laws are the only access we have, as historians, to grasp certain experiences and notions of justice. This is widely shown by historians of slavery and those dedicated to domestic work. These are histories which need to be explored.

Which laws became important for ensuring rights for labourers in different places and times? How does mobility affect the struggle for rights? How did knowledge of labour rights travel with labour migrants and how was it received? What was the role of the state in specific processes of local labour struggles? How much were international institutions like the International Labour Organisation (ILO) involved in setting norms as well as defining and protecting labour rights?

Finally, the Summer Academy will also consider the ways in which race, gender, ethnicity and other social markers shaped notions of justice and injustice in relation to work and labour.

The following aspects, among others, should be central to the projects and discussions:

- Politics, trade unions and labour movement
- Strikes and other forms of collective action
- Migration and changing perceptions of justice and injustice
- Work and state regulations (in colonial/postcolonial and socialist/post-socialist regimes)
- States and labour rights
- Contracts, collective bargaining and labour arrangements (non-wage labour)
- Child work, sex work, domestic work
- Labour rights and gender
- Work, race and racism in notions of justice
- Labour rights and human rights

The Summer Academy shall focus methodologically on historical perspectives that investigate global interconnections and entanglements. The critical reflection of general comparative notions should be part of the individual projects presented at the Summer Academy. Moreover, the Summer Academy will also provide the venue for an in-depth discussion of methodological issues and the question of sources with renowned historians and social scientists from around the world. The language of the Summer Academy will be English. Within its framework, selected participants will present their research (40 minutes) and comment on a project of a



peer (20 minutes). Moreover it is obligatory that all participants hand in an essay on specific topics related to the Summer Academy's theme as well as answers to a set of key texts prior to the event.

Application

To participate in the Summer Academy research scholars at the doctoral level need to apply with a brief outline of their current project on how their work relates to the themes of the Summer Academy as well as how they can contribute to it (max. 7.800 characters). Proposed projects should assume a historical perspective and will be particularly pertinent if they take account of connections beyond the nation state and attempt to reflect upon the possibilities of connecting regional and systematic approaches. This does not exclude carefully contextualized case studies. Travel and accommodation costs of the selected participants will be covered by the organisers of the Summer Academy.

We welcome relevant applications from all parts of the globe.

Application procedure:

Please use the electronic form on our [website \(https://rework.hu-berlin.de/de/cfa-summer-academy.html\)](https://rework.hu-berlin.de/de/cfa-summer-academy.html).

You will be asked to provide information regarding your biography, your academic background as well as details on your current research. Applicants should provide the names of two referees in addition to that.

Please note that we can only accept electronically submitted applications!

Application deadline: 31 May 2017

For further information, please contact:

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