



International Conference of Labour and Social History

Internationale Tagung der HistorikerInnen der Arbeiter- und anderer sozialer Bewegungen
Conférence internationale d'histoire ouvrière et sociale



Institut für Geschichte
des ländlichen Raumes



österreichische gesellschaft
für politische bildung

PROGRAMME (23.8.2019)

'Working on the Land: Actors, Societies and Environments'

5 –7 September 2019

AK-Bildungshaus Jägermayrhof, Römerstraße 98, A-4020 Linz, Austria

Conference Languages: English – German

55th ITH Conference, organized by the International Conference of Labour and Social History (ITH), kindly supported by the Chamber of Labour of Upper Austria, the Austrian Society for Political Education, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, the Department of Social and Economic History, Johannes Kepler University Linz, the Linz University Fund, the Institute of Rural History, St. Pölten, and the City of Linz.

Preparatory Group

Lisa Bolyos (Vienna), **Josef Ehmer** (University of Vienna), **Winfried R. Garscha** (Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance/DÖW), **Dirk Hoerder** (Vienna), **Erich Landsteiner** (University of Vienna), **Ernst Langthaler** (Johannes Kepler University Linz), **Lukas Neissl** (ITH, Vienna), **Silke Neunsinger** (Labour Movement Archives and Library, Stockholm), **Brigitte Pellar** (Vienna), **Susan Zimmermann** (ITH, Vienna)

Objectives

The ITH Conference 2019 aims at strengthening the links between labour history and rural history. It intends to address the topic 'working on the land' from two different angles: firstly, agricultural work as co-production of society and nature and, secondly, rural labour relations as elements of larger political and economic systems. Contributions to this conference will explore how these two perspectives complement each other, identify research desiderata and blind spots in the respective other, creatively develop bridges and contribute to the theoretical, methodological and empirical enrichment of the history of agrarian work and labour.

The first angle highlights how agricultural work – growing cereals, tree- or garden-crops, raising cattle, working in woods and forestry or processing raw materials produced on the land – differs from other forms of work. It draws our attention to the differences of agriculture from other branches of the economy due to its natural embedment: the natural constraints on the choice of crops in specific regions, the biological growth processes of plants and animals, the seasonality of the labour process, the uncertainties of weather and the resulting output-related risks and the effects these features may have (had) on the material and immaterial traits of culture, such as settlement patterns, household composition, techniques and technology, perceptions of the environment, the possibilities to intensify the production process, the choice of contracts, social stratification and property rights. In order to grasp the co-production of society and nature, researchers might undertake in-depth case studies with a regional or local focus.

The second angle from which the topic is being addressed emphasizes the variety of rural labour relations, looking rather at commonalities with other forms of labour relations, and, last but not least, at the wide range of combinations – by individuals and households – between agricultural and non-agricultural work. This includes family farming, service in husbandry, the various forms of free and unfree labour, forced labour and wage labour (e.g. permanent, seasonal, migratory), but also agricultural activities of rural artisans and industrial workers, the gendered and age/life course-related division of labour and many other topics. The connections of

these various labour relations with overarching (socio-)political and (socio-)economic formations (for instance, such as territorial states and global capitalism(s) since the sixteenth century) are of particular interest. The respective focus is on more general aspects such as class and power relations, social movements and (non-)organizations of rural workers, mobility and migration, commodity chains, governance structures, the access to landed property and other key resources and market developments as explanations for the social constitution of rural societies. This perspective calls for the broadening of research to multiple scales, ranging from local to global.

The conference aims at bringing together contributions from different disciplines (e.g. history, geography, sociology, economics, anthropology) and multiple temporal and spatial contexts, which address the complexity of rural labour relations and the agency of rural workers from the angles outlined above. Interest in long- and short-term historical processes and in social change should form the common ground for interdisciplinary discussion. Besides detailed case studies, contributions focused on international comparisons and/or transnational connections are particularly welcome. Papers might highlight the practical rooms of manoeuvre of rural actors, varying between adaptation and resistance, or explore how the history of agrarian labour and work in a given space was influenced by natural opportunities and constraints, technological developments and globalizing market forces. These are but two examples for how contributions to this conference might productively build and expand on the interconnection of rural history and labour history through a focus on the study of work.

Thursday, 5 September 2019

Registration of participants at the venue

12.00 – 14.00 Meeting of the ITH Board and International Scientific Committee

14.00 – 14.30 Break

14.30 – 16.30 General Assembly of the ITH

17.00 – 17.30

Conference Opening

Susan Zimmermann, ITH President

Franz Molterer, Deputy Director of the Chamber of Labour of Upper Austria

Claudia Hahn, Member of the City Council of Linz

Ernst Langthaler, Head of the Department of Social and Economic History, Johannes Kepler University Linz, and the Institute of Rural History, St. Pölten

17.30 - 19.15

Keynote Lecture

Thijs Lambrecht (Ghent University): ***Commonalities and Diversities: Regulating Rural Labour in Europe, c. 1250 - c. 1900***

19.15 – 21.00

Welcome Reception by the Major of Linz

Friday, 6 September 2019

9.30 – 11.00

Panel I: State-Led Transformations

Chair and comment: Dirk Hoerder (Vienna)

- Holger Czitrich-Stahl (Förderkreis Archive und Bibliotheken zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung, Berlin): *The Multi-Coloured World of the Prussian Estate and Socialism: Labour Relations, Agrarian Question and Organizational Policy of Social Democracy and the Trade Union Movement Before the German Revolution 1918/19*
- Jessica Richter (Institute of Rural History, St. Pölten): *Organising the Agricultural Labour Market in Interwar Austria*
- Martin Schröder (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg): *The Venezuelan Reforma Agraria: The Emergence of State Actors in Rural Affairs*

11.00 – 11.15

Coffee Break

11.15 – 12.45

Panel II: Labour Markets

Chair and comment: Stefano Agnoletto (Fondazione ISEC, Sesto San Giovanni-Milano)

- Peter Woodley (Australian National University, Canberra): *'A Decent Sort of a Chap': Australian Farmers' Diverse Encounters with Labour, 1880-1930*
- Tina Bopp (University of Basel): *On the Coloniality of the Recruitment Infrastructure and (Agricultural) Labour Regimes in Europe*
- Janina Puder (Friedrich Schiller University Jena): *Transnational Rural Labour Relations in the Context of the Emerging Bioeconomy in Malaysia by the Example of Migratory Labour*

12.45 – 14.00

Lunch

14.00 – 15.30

Panel III: Commodity Chains

Chair and comment: David Mayer (University of Vienna)

- Rolf Bauer (University of Vienna): *Free and Unfree Labour in the 'Global Countryside': A Comparative Analysis of Jute, Poppy and Tea Production in 19th Century South Asia*
- Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk (Utrecht University): *Peasant Households Under Pressure: Women's Work and the Cultivation System on Java, 1830-1870*
- Ernst Langthaler (Johannes Kepler University Linz): *Matching Plants, Labour and Technology: Soy Farming in Globalized Regions*

15.30 – 15.45

Coffee Break

15.45 – 17.15

Panel IV: Working Bodies

Chair and comment: Ernst Langthaler (Johannes Kepler University Linz)

- Juri Auderset (Archives of Rural History, Bern): *Agricultural Working Knowledge: Towards a Science of Agricultural Work in Interwar Europe*
- Peter Moser (Archives of Rural History, Bern): *Working Companions: Farm Animals and their Manifold Functions, 1850-1950*
- Majda Černič Istenič (University of Ljubljana): *Experiences of Farm Families with the Consequences of Occupational Diseases and Injuries from the Historical Perspective*

18.00 – 19.00

Dinner

19.00 – 21.00

Public evening event (in German):

'Arbeit auf dem Land: Selbstorganisation und Selbstermächtigung in der Landarbeit' (at the venue)

Saturday, 7 September 2019

9.30 – 11.30

Panel V: Preindustrial Ruralities

Chair and comment: Josef Ehmer (University of Vienna)

- Erich Landsteiner (University of Vienna): *Matching Vines and Labour: Wage Labour and Sharecropping in Late Medieval and Early Modern Austrian Viticulture (14th-17th)*
- Klemens Kaps (Johannes Kepler University Linz): *Labour Relations and the Impact of Global Markets during a Period of Economic Transformation: Agriculture and Proto-Industries in Rural Spaces in Central Europe during the 18th Century*
- Göran Rydén (Uppsala University): *A Swedish Plantation? Agricultural Work in the Midst of the Eighteenth-Century Iron Industry*
- Christiane Cheneaux-Berthelot (Université Paris-Sorbonne/Paris IV): *The Farmers of the Seine Department in the XIXth Century: Specificity of their Activity on the Outskirts of Paris and Social Study*

11.30 – 11.45 Coffee Break

11.45 – 13.15 **Panel VI: Power Struggles**

Chair and comment: Silke Neunsinger (Labour Movement Archives and Library, Stockholm)

- Lisa Markowitz (University of Louisville): *High Altitude Fields (of Power): Southern Peruvian Alpaca Producers and the International Market*
- Pheiga Amanda G. (Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai): *The Dynamics and Politics in the Rongmei-Naga Tribe's Land Governance System*
- A. Lozaanba Khumbah (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi): *Agrarian Transformation in the Hills of Northeast India: The Unlikely Story of Shifting Agriculture*

13.15 – 14.15 Lunch

14.15 – 15.45 **Concluding Debate**

Chair: Erich Landsteiner (University of Vienna)