

51st ITH Conference

Work and Non-Work

24-26 September 2015

**Humboldt Universität zu Berlin / IGK Work and Human Life Cycle
in Global History (re:work)**

Conference language: English

CALL FOR PAPERS

The critical reflection of the concept of work and the interrogation of its long-standing limitation to wage labour and gainful employment are among the central achievements of a global perspective on the history and the present of labour. Within this context the question arises regarding the permanently (re-)drawn and contested demarcations and “grey zones” between work and non-work, legitimate and unacknowledged, paid and unpaid work as part of the global development of the modern economy; this would include the migrant worker and the “vagabond”, the “housewife” and the cook, child labour, the video game at the workplace, the “petty criminal”, the unemployed unemployment activist etc. The differentiation between work and non-work, and the interrelation of the two spheres delimited from and merging into each other, have played an important role in economic development, the social valuation of different activities, and the life and the agency of non/working people themselves.

The 51st ITH Conference investigates the topic of “work and non-work” in an interdisciplinary perspective, in particular, from the point of view of the political construction of work and non-work. This approach is based on a broad notion of politics. The conference aims to contribute to denaturalising and re-politicising the concept and the practice of work and non-work and to highlight both work and non-work as a social relationship. The definition of certain activities as work or non-work and the relation between these poles have always been closely related to economic and socio-political policies, business strategies and social conflicts and struggles. Specifically, four (to some degree overlapping) focuses are central to the conference theme:

1.) Production of work and non-work: This theme explores how the – often ambiguous or even contradictory – boundaries between work and non-work have been invented, relocated, abolished and reconfigured and about how different actors, institutions and instruments have been involved in these processes.

2.) Everyday life between work and non-work: This is about investigating the agency of working people in concrete non/work situations (“self-will” [Eigensinn], slowdown of production, non-work at work and work in the free time etc.).

3.) Movements against (wage) labour: Hereunder, the refusal to work, struggles against work or specific forms of work, utopian anti-work concepts etc. could be subsumed.

4.) Politics of knowledge production: Contributions to this theme explore how different traditions – e.g. feminist or development research – have questioned prevailing definitions of work and non-work. How and why have such concepts influenced global labour history, what changes occur in the course of the transfer etc.?

We invite contributions on all world regions and are glad to receive comparative and transnational papers as well as contributions integrating different axis of analysis – such as class, gender, global and regional inequality and asynchrony, ethnicity, life course etc.

SUBMISSION

Proposed papers (in English) should include:

- abstract (max. 300 words)
- biographical note (max. 200 words)
- full address und e-mail address
- and the selected thematic section

Proposals to be sent to **Lukas Neissl**: lukas.neissl@doew.at

TIME SCHEDULE

Submission of proposals: by **31 December 2014**

Notification of acceptance: **31 January 2015**

Full papers: by **1 August 2015**

PREPARATORY GROUP

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