

## **CFP: Labour Mobility in the Socialist World and Its Legacies**

Almost 30 years after the crumbling of the state-socialist regimes in Eastern Europe, the conceptualisation of the state-socialist era as a time of immobility and isolation continues to linger. This portrayal utterly misses the robust flows of people, technology, goods, knowledge and capital that took place between socialist states worldwide. Recently, scholars from a variety of disciplines have begun to map these socialist circulations. The planned workshop will build on these pioneering efforts with the goal of furthering the understanding of these complex flows – particularly those involving workers and technical staff – within the erstwhile socialist world.

Some of the socialist circulations, such as the stays by thousands of university students from Africa, Asia and Latin America in various Eastern European countries, have already received some scholarly attention. However, other forms of mobility, such as state-socialist labour migrations, remain largely unexplored. Yet, examples abound: the Vietnamese government dispatched thousands of its teachers, engineers, agronomists, doctors and planners to Madagascar, Guinea, Algeria, Angola and Mozambique; Cuba sent both its intelligentsia and its blue-collar workers to Europe for training and work and simultaneously provided secondary and university education to 30,000 people from the sub-Saharan Africa; Vietnamese, Cubans and Mozambicans travelled for vocational training or as contract workers to the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, the Soviet Union, Hungary and Poland; many engineers, doctors, and military officers from eastern Europe travelled in the opposite direction to help build power stations, cement factories or hospitals and to train local personnel for them on site. Labour mobility took place within regions too: Hungarians and Poles, for instance, crossed the border daily or weekly to work in Czechoslovak companies. In short, the world of socialist labour mobility was complex one: It was multidirectional, crossed local borders, spanned world regions, was simultaneously an economic, political and cultural phenomenon.

We also wish to address the contemporary incarnations and the legacy of these past circulations. Business and trade links still follow some of the earlier patterns of socialist-era mobility. Some of the experts and students who were trained and socialised in a broader socialist world of the late Cold War continue to hold high positions in many countries and thus shape these countries global engagements today.

We invite proposals for papers to be presented at a **workshop** that will take place at the **European Studies Centre at St Antony's College, University of Oxford, 19-20 May 2016**.

We are interested **in papers** that map and analyse these socialist circulations and encounters, **particularly those focusing on the migrations of blue-collar workers on the one hand and experts and technicians on the other**. Contributions analysing the ways in which these earlier forms of mobility continue to exist, if and how they changed overtime, or the ways in which they continue to shape global processes and institutions today are also welcome. Papers might address, for example:

- the histories of particular migrations of workers and/or technicians and experts
- everyday experience of labour migration
- institutional mechanisms and state policies that structured the migrations schemes
- the role of gender and race in socialist labour and professional migrations
- migrations as cultural and political encounters
- socialist migration in the context of broader history of labour mobility and globalisation
- cultural representations of socialist migrants and migration projects
- legacies of cold war era socialist labour migration

By analysing socialist labour migrations on their own terms and as sui generis phenomena that operated, at least in part, on different principles than labour migrations outside the socialist world, the workshop will contribute to expanding and refining existing scholarship on labour migration, which continues to see such movements of people as by-products of global capitalism. Similarly, but more broadly, by thematising socialist circulations, the workshop will map the ways in which the socialist countries contributed to and shaped the story of globalisation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Please send **300-500-word abstracts** and your **CV** by **29 February 2016** to Alena Alamgir at [alena.alamgir@history.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alena.alamgir@history.ox.ac.uk) AND (cc:) to project co-ordinator Catherine Devenish at [C.Devenish@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:C.Devenish@exeter.ac.uk). Applicants will be notified about the status of their proposals on 31 March 2016.

For administrative questions, please write to Catherine Devenish at [C.Devenish@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:C.Devenish@exeter.ac.uk); for academic enquiries, contact Alena Alamgir at [alena.alamgir@history.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alena.alamgir@history.ox.ac.uk).

Some funding to cover travel and accommodation expenses is available, but potential participants should also explore funding opportunities at their home institutions.

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