



## WORCK Newsletter N° 6

Aalborg/Vienna, 10 November 2020

Dear members of the COST Action WORCK,  
dear colleagues interested in the study of labour and coercion,

these are truly challenging times! Europe is in midst the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and several European cities are confronted with terror attacks and extreme violence. The current situation makes it extremely difficult for a funding tool dedicated to connecting people through meetings, conferences and training schools to spend the granted funds.

In order to cope with the current situation, we would like to invite you all to think of collaborative projects you could realise with a WORCK member of another country in a prolonged research stay by applying for a **Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM)**. STSMs are aimed at supporting individual mobility and collaboration between researchers within our COST Action and are open to early career researchers as well as to active WORCK members. Due to the current situation, applications can be submitted any time until the end of the current grant period (latest submission deadline: 1 April 2021) and must be completed before the end of April 2021. You may apply for a stay of a minimum of 5 calendar days and a maximum of 90 days. Researchers from ITC countries can request a pre-payment of 50% of their STSM Grant to be received after the first day of their stay. We are well aware of the challenges related to mobility during the coming months and will do our best to support and advise applicants through the process. For more information, please visit <https://www.worck.eu/activities/stsm/> and get in contact with the STSM Coordinator Clara Almagro Vidal ([stsm@worck.eu](mailto:stsm@worck.eu)).

Despite the difficult circumstances, however, we are both very touched and impressed to see how the WORCK community has developed alternative ways to connect ideas and realise border-crossing research and publication projects.

Our **1<sup>st</sup> WORCK Conference** on “Reconceptualising Wage Labour From a Long-Term and Transregional Perspective” with 11 panels and 38 speakers took place online from 16-19 September. Organised by Isidora Grubacki, Susan Zimmermann and the IT Department of CEU Budapest, it was great to see how a continued discussion with the same bunch of people happened between places reaching from Norway to Malta, and from France to Bulgaria and Turkey, including conference speakers and participants from Brazil, Kenya, South Africa, India and China. Chronologically and thematically focused panels contained both theoretical reflections and empirical investigations and illustrated the richness of the network.

The **WORCK Publication Platform** ([data.worck.eu](https://data.worck.eu)), developed and hosted by Silke Schwandt and her team in Bielefeld, was officially launched during the mentioned conference. The platform is the place where the working groups and individual network members can share their data, document their work and discussion process and publish research results or items meant to reach a broader audience. All items published on the publication platform receive professional proofreading funded by WORCK as well as an official DOI. Authors

contributing data, maps, essays or articles to the platform can thus declare their contribution as scientific publication on their individual publication list. At the same time the NOPAQUE environment was launched at the university of Bielefeld ([nopaque.sfb1288.uni-bielefeld.de/](http://nopaque.sfb1288.uni-bielefeld.de/)) and is now available and open for all WORCK members. In 2021, the DH Team (Silke Schwandt and Tobias Hodel) will bring together different tools and technologies. NOPAQUE will become the central hub and connected to Transkribus (for handwritten text recognition) as well as CATMA (an annotation tool), allowing to bring together our textual research in workflows that can result in data publications on our WORCK Publication Platform. At the same time, the DH Team will continue to offer training to WORCK members and enlarge the supported tools according to specific requirements.

**WG 1 “Grammars of Coercion”**, coordinated by Claude Chevalere and Branimir Brgles, continues its online discussion of exemplary source documents and the use of digital tools for semantic text analysis. The working group members who have presented at one of these online workshops are now starting to transform their online presentations into semantic data stories for the publication platform. First examples on an interrogation of runaway convicts (Johan Heinsen) and a Chinese judiciary (Claude Chevalere) are already online: <https://ubib-sfb1288-appsrv03.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/?q=stories>. These online discussions and semantic data stories set the basis for the special issue on “Historical Semantics for Labour and Social History” at the Austrian history journal *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften* (OeZG). 15 working group members have submitted paper proposals for the special issue and will work on their articles in the upcoming months. In 2021, WG 1 will organise an authors’ workshops with an internal peer review procedure to discuss and prepare both the data stories and the OeZG articles for publication.

**WG 2 “Sites and Fields of Coercion”**, originally coordinated by Christian De Vito, met online in June and September 2020 to discuss the relevance of focusing on specific sites and their connections in order to address labour coercion. Starting from empirically-grounded short papers presented by some members, the working group has started to analyse some broader issues that lie at the heart of its approach. Among others, these include: the “logic of deployment”, i.e. the rationale behind the employment of specific sets of labour relations within each site; the dialectics between top-down categorizations of the institutional context of work, and the spatiality of work produced by the workers’ own individual and collective agency; the importance of looking at the spatiality within each site, and how this blurs the very divide between “sites” and “fields”. From October 2020, the working group has expanded its coordinating team, including Amal Shahid, Nicola Pizzolato and Christian De Vito. Meanwhile, two main events are under construction: a working group workshop – hopefully in person – in spring 2021, and a joint workshop with WG 3 to be held in Venice in June 2021.

**WG 3 “(Im)mobilisations of the Workforce”**, coordinated by Vilhelm Vilhelmsson and Biljana Stojić, will be hosting a series of online meetings in the upcoming months where 2-3 members give presentations on the papers they will be submitting to the edited volume, which several members of the working group are developing. It is currently planned to submit a fully developed book proposal to the publisher De Gruyter in 2021. In October 2020, Müge Telci Özbek from the University of Istanbul joined the coordinating team of the working group. Several members of the group are also involved in organising and editing a special issue of *Scandinavian Journal of History* on “Labour and coercion in the Nordic region in the early

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modern period” which will be published in 2023. An authors’ workshop for the special issue will be held in Aalborg in Denmark in April 2021.

**WG 4 “Intersecting Marginalities”**, coordinated by Natalia Jarska and Hanne Østhus, is continuing with online meetings. A call for papers for a special issue on “Intersectional Approaches to Coercion and Marginalisation in Labour” has just been published (see attachment). The submission deadline is 1 January 2020. WG 4 is also planning an authors’ workshop in connection with the special issue. The reading group on “State socialism and coercion” has welcomed new members and has had an online meeting to discuss selected readings and the framework of the joined project.

The **Public Outreach Group**, coordinated by Anamarija Batista and Corinna Peres, is preparing an online exhibition on “Ideas of Productivity and their Influence on Working Conditions” and a podcast series entitled “WORCK’s Workers” on working conditions in academia. Following up on the scientific contributions of our conference in Budapest, the Public Outreach Group is planning a cooperation with several illustrators who will visually “narrate” key elements of the discussions (e.g. remuneration and coercion). This will constitute a series called “WORCK Informs Through Illustrations”, explicitly addressed to a wider public.

The **Think Tank Group**, coordinated by Viola Müller, Gonçalo Silva and Fernando Mendiola, collects annotated bibliographies on various topics in the study of labour and coercion. Examples on voluntary work in socialist Albania (Dorjana Klosi) and on slavery and resistance in the US South (Viola Müller) have already been published on the WORCK Publication Platform: <https://ubib-sfb1288-appsrv03.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/?q=bibliographies>. Furthermore, two new WORCK blog series will be launched next year, one on “Squeezing the Horizon: Academic Labour in the European Research Framework” (contact: Peter-Paul Bänziger), and one on “Convict Labour: Prisoner’s Deployment in and outside Prisons” (contact: Fernando Mendiola). The first blog series on “Covid-19 and the Workers of the World” has now been moved to the WORCK Publication Platform: <https://ubib-sfb1288-appsrv03.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/?q=blog-series-1-covid-19-and-workers-world>.

**Researchers from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITC)** are encouraged to apply for grants covering conference fees for online conferences. The following countries are considered ITCs: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, the Republic of North Macedonia, the Republic of Serbia and Turkey. Please get in contact with Jakub Stofaník ([itc-cg@worck.eu](mailto:itc-cg@worck.eu)).

Finally, we are very happy to welcome Teresa Petrik to the Vienna team. She is a master student of history and sociology and supports the WORCK network by managing the website, the mailing lists and the Slack workspace and networking WORCK on social media. She also helps with the organisation of the WORCK-ELHN Conference next summer. A preliminary conference programme with 48 panels from the ELHN working groups and plenary sessions from the WORCK network will be published by the end of November.



We conclude with a little preview of upcoming **WORCK activities**:

- 17 November 2020, 2-4pm (UTC +2), online: WG 1 CATMA Annotation Training 04 (contact: Claude Chevalleyre)
- 20 November 2020, 3-5pm (UTC +2), online: WG 3 Meeting (contact: Vilhelm Vilhelmsson)
- 11 December 2020, 10-12am (UTC +2), online: DH Reading Group (contact: Thomas Wallnig/Claude Chevalleyre)
- 11 December 2020, 1-3pm (UTC +2), online: Transkribus Training (contact: Tobias Hodel/Claude Chevalleyre)
- 22–24 February 2021: WORCK Meeting 2 and Management Committee Meeting 3 (Lisbon, Portugal)
- 30 August–3 September 2021: WORCK-ELHN Conference (Vienna, Austria)

If you would like to organise an activity within or in cooperation with the WORCK network, please get in contact with us ([worck@worck.eu](mailto:worck@worck.eu)).

Stay safe and take care!

Johan Heinsen and Juliane Schiel

Attachment:

- Call for Research Papers for a Special Issue on “Intersectional Approaches to Coercion and Marginalisation in Labour” (contact: Natalia Jarska and Hanne Østhus)