

Dear Colleagues:

It is with great pleasure that we write to announce a summer institute, “Transnational Labour, Transnational Methods” to be held from 8-14 June, 2008 on the campus of the University of Toronto (UofT).

We invite you to nominate possible participants to the institute. It would be useful if you considered not only students and recent graduates of your own programme, but also scholars you may have met elsewhere, especially in the Global South.

This institute will unite established and junior scholars and graduate students in an intensive week of discussion, planning, and training in methods and practices of transnational labour and working-class history. We are proud to have assembled an enormously distinguished and diverse cohort of facilitators who will be leading sessions during the institute. We have attached a provisional list of facilitators and visiting scholars at the end of this letter. Our summer institute is co-organized by the UofT, Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies (CAPSTRANS), the International Institute for Social History (Amsterdam, Netherlands), and the Toronto area United Steelworkers.

We are aiming to assemble a cohort of around fifty participants from the Global South and North. Ideally, participants should be emerging scholars, including graduate students or recent Ph.D.s. It is not necessary that they be working on global research topics, only that they are engaged scholars who could benefit from contact and collaboration with leading scholars and fellow participants. We would ask that you pass along this invitation to possible participants and/or to send along nominations and we can contact them directly.

The Summer Institute Sessions

This institute is a unique opportunity for new scholars to build the international cohort that will trace the next steps in our fields. The institute will provide both training and stimulus for collaboration on imaginative new projects. It will promote enduring structures of international sharing. In addition to plenary guest lectures, our schedule will include special sessions on practical, methodological, and theoretical issues. Methodologically, the institute will feature intensive discussions with experienced researchers on a broad spectrum of topics, from slavery to gender studies. We believe that both facilitators and participants will leave the institute with a broader understanding of how our field has developed in different national and regional historiographies and the political role it can and has played. Our goal is that this understanding will be realized in international projects of collaborative research, innovative publishing, and translations planned and begun at the institute.

Participants, facilitators, and visiting lecturers/experts will come from the global North and South and reflect our commitment to a broadly conceived labour and working-class history. Participants in the institute will be part of small, but globally representative groups working closely with a facilitator. They will also have a chance to select individual ‘modules’ that reflect their research, academic, personal, and political issues. We are working closely already with our facilitators to develop the programme. Sessions and modules, though tailored directly to the composition of the participants, might include, for example:

- **Industry and Empire:** In what ways was the international working class shaped by imperial strategies and how did anti-imperial and post-colonial movements merge with working-class movements? How can labour history engage with imperial/post-colonial historiographies?
- **Economy, Culture, and Commodities:** How did the global demand for commodities and extracted natural resources reshape local communities and link disparate regions into unequal systems of consumption and production? How have workers found themselves in global competition, and are there instances in which communities have been able to negotiate the conditions of commodity production?
- **Labouring Law:** How have local, national, and imperial legal regimes engaged with the transnational? How have regulations around work and production responded to global flows of and competition between free and unfree labour?
- **Work, Race, and Gender:** How has work been understood and culturally represented in different national and transnational contexts? How can a global labour history incorporate different forms of free, coerced, domestic, agricultural, industrial, and unpaid labor?
- **Narratives of National Histories:** What are the different local and national traditions of writing histories of labour? How have these traditions engaged in dialogue in the past?

We will provide ample opportunities, as well, to encourage small group and individual interaction with the aim of facilitating group research initiatives. We will be in frequent correspondence with participants in the months and weeks leading up to the institute to share news and further schedules. We ask only for a minimum of prior preparation.

Background Organization

This summer institute is the result of three years of planning and organization among historians from around the world. In 2005-6, historians from the University of Toronto convened an international working-group in transnational labour history which met first in Hyderabad, India and later in Campinas, Brazil. These meetings have produced a key document that considers the interlocking political and theoretical challenges in imagining a historiography that is transnational in content and practice. This document will provide a basis for our discussions at the institute. We are committed to forging international and North-South research and publication collaborations through this workshop. Locally, this summer institute is supported by a network of labour and working-class historians at the University of Toronto and a Labour Studies concentration that is part of the Social and Equity Studies Programme at New College, a constituent college of the University of Toronto.

Toronto and the University of Toronto

We are pleased to welcome participants to Toronto, Canada, one of the most diverse cities in the world. Home to numerous immigrant communities, Toronto is a safe and fascinating city. As Canada's premier research university, the UofT claims one of North America's largest history departments and a substantial programme in labour history. Participants will be able to make use of the UofT's facilities, including one of the largest university libraries in the world. New College is home to many of the UofT's area studies programmes, including African Studies, Caribbean Studies, South Asian Studies, and Women and Gender Studies. Our faculty and student research interests span the globe and will provide a welcoming environment to visiting participants and facilitators. The UofT has a long experience in organizing international gatherings in labour history. Most recently, the UofT hosted the "Labouring Feminism" conference which has spawned numerous papers, special journal issues, and a follow-up conference in Stockholm, Sweden. For more information on the UofT, New College and its programmes, and the city of Toronto, please visit:

www.utoronto.ca

www.newcollege.utoronto.ca

www.toronto.ca

Participation and Bursary

We ask that participants commit to the staying for the entire institute and to active participation in the institute's different sessions. Possible participants should submit:

- A curriculum vitae
- A 500-1,000 word statement of research interests and personal goals for the institute
- **Please send all correspondence to global.labour@utoronto.ca**

As the language of interaction at the institute will (largely) be English, we ask for correspondence in English. (However, please contact us directly with requests for submissions in other languages, including Dutch, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish.)

Our budget is designed to guarantee a diverse institute cohort and recognizes the reality of unequal academic resources. Our goal is to support or partially support the travel and participation of those, especially from the Global South, who would otherwise not be able to attend. Our bursary funds will be distributed based on need and on concerns about diversity. For all participants, we are delighted to offer extremely low cost housing and food at New College, located in the centre of Toronto and at the heart of the downtown UofT campus. The institute is requesting 'tuition' of CA\$750 (excluding of travel). This will include all housing, food, instruction, as well as support our bursary to guarantee the participation of scholars from the South. Please contact us directly at global.labour@utoronto.ca with questions about the bursary and costs.

We look forward to hearing from you and from possible participants. As we eagerly anticipate welcoming participants and facilitators to Toronto this summer, do not hesitate to contact us with any questions and suggestions.

In solidarity,

Daniel E. Bender
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University of Toronto

Elizabeth Esch
Assistant Professor
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Rick Halpern
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Franca Iacovetta
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Neville Kirk
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Manchester Metropolitan University

Jayeeta Sharma
Assistant Professor
University of Western Ontario

Marcel van der Linden
Director of Research
International Institute of Social History

Provisional List of Facilitators and Visiting Scholars

We are extremely excited to be bringing to Toronto perhaps the most far-ranging group of historians of labour ever assembled. Geographic areas of research are listed below in parenthesis. Our complete list of facilitators and visiting scholars is still being developed. Our provisional list of facilitators and scholars include:

- Ravi Ahuja, School of Oriental and African Studies, United Kingdom (South Asia)
- Peter Alexander, University of Johannesburg, South Africa (Southern Africa)
- Stefan Berger, University of Manchester, United Kingdom (Germany and Europe)
- Carolyn Brown, Rutgers University, United States (West Africa)
- Sidney Chaloub, University of Campinas, Brazil (Brazil)
- Paulo Fontes, Fundação Getulio Vargas, Brazil (Brazil)
- Diane Frost, University of Liverpool, United Kingdom (West Africa)

- Prabhu Mohapatra, Delhi University, India (South Asia and Caribbean)
- Nico Pizzolato, Queen Mary College, University of London, United Kingdom (United States and Italy)
- Lara Putnam, University of Pittsburgh, United States (Central America and Caribbean)
- Donald Quataert, University of Binghamton, United States (Turkey and Ottoman Empire)
- Samita Sen, Jadavpur University, India (South Asia)
- Kerry Taylor, Massey University, New Zealand (New Zealand)
- Angela Vergara, California State University, Los Angeles, United States (Chile)
- Peter Way, University of Windsor, Canada (British North America)

Barbara Weinstein, New York University, United States (Brazil)

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