



**46<sup>th</sup> Conference of the IALHI, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh  
16 to 19 September 2015**

***Global Connections in Labour History: Collecting and Discovering Migrant Workers' Heritage***

**Abstracts**

**Lynette Cawthra** (Working Class Movement Library, Salford): *Voting for change: 150 years of radical movements, 1819 to 1969*

The Working Class Movement Library and the People's History Museum/Labour History Archive have been successful as a partnership in getting a 'Collecting Cultures' grant from the UK's Heritage Lottery Fund. This gives five years of funding towards new acquisitions (and accompanying audience engagement work). The project, *Voting for Change - 150 years of radical movements, 1819 to 1969*, will build upon the complementary strengths of both collections to acquire material related to movements and campaigns for the franchise, from the build-up to the Peterloo protest in 1819 to the lowering of the voting age in 1969.

During the five-year project period there are significant anniversaries to be celebrated, including the 150th anniversary in 2018 of the founding of the Trades Union Congress in Manchester (with the interesting more local angle of Manchester and Salford Trades Council being set up two years earlier).

PHM and WCML had already worked together on a project, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. Called *Unlocking Ideas Worth Fighting For*, it aimed to discover the 'hidden treasures' of both organisations and forge links between the two. Its success has encouraged the two institutions to pursue further avenues for collaborative working.

**Fiona Bourne** (Royal College of Nursing Archives, Edinburgh and London): *Labour history collections at the Royal College of Nursing Archive*

This paper will seek to share stories from a hidden gem of labour history. The Royal College of Nursing Archives holds a unique, high-quality resource for labour history. Interviews have been recorded with nurses across the UK since the 1980s reflecting a large workforce. Nurses form a highly mobile population. Most have neither trained nor worked where they were brought up. Potential nurses always wanted to train at the best large municipal hospitals and were willing to travel. Some of the individuals interviewed speak of earlier generations, others worked through wars and epidemics, lead where others followed or travelled great distances to work as nurses.

We have sought to capture socio-economic information through family background and factors in choosing nursing. Often interviews start overseas: Annie Altschul travelling to the relative safety of Britain from Austria during the Anschluss; Shirla Philogene's tearful arrival from Jamaica at the English hospital where she was to train; Dubliner Alison Maddin becoming a Kilmarnock fever hospital nurse despite her father's wishes.

Members voluntarily do most of our recording and also donate whole research projects so the collection continues to grow – over 1100 hours of interviews with over 600 nurses. Our interviews have been digitised and transcribed and the collection's catalogue is available online. The collection is available on-site and researchers are encouraged to use extracts. Increased accessibility has increased research including, *Sisters: Heroic true-life stories from the nurses of World War Two* (2013) as well as contributions to a range of events and exhibitions. We are looking to increase accessibility through more innovative approaches to Audience Engagement. At the heart of this remains a wonderful example of a nursing 'community archive'. Pride in their community gives

nurses the passion to capture, collect and share stories with the wider research community and the public.

**Andreas Marquet** (Archiv der sozialen Demokratie der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Bonn): *Retroconversion of analogue finding aids at the Archives of Social Democracy*

The Archives of social Democracy (AdsD) of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) developed a new strategy on getting access to an overview about its collections and finding aids. The project to be presented at the IALHI conference is part of this strategy as it deals with the retroconversion of analogue finding aids. The project was funded by the German research funding agency "Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft" (DFG) in 2014/15.

In preparation for the proposal of funding the finding aids were clustered into different categories depending on the question whether they were handwritten or typed. With these categories the duration of the project was calculated.

The first working package was about scanning the finding aids and afterwards analyzing the digitized text via OCR-software. As expected the amount of work which was to be done on the transcript by an employee depended on the original in respect to the categorization. After scanning and character recognition the results were mapped to a self-defined format, readable by the software FAUST which is used for generating descriptive metadata and retrieving archival objects.

After importing the raw datasets they were processed following internal standards such as the redefined structure of alpha-numeric signatures. These data were published at the website of the AdsD. Uploading data not only on its own website the AdsD and the DFG as well are aiming to participate at archival portals. Therefore data was processed following the EAD-standard and afterwards uploaded at the archives portal of North Rhine-Westphalia (Archive Nordrhein-Westfalen) which aims to hand-over data towards the archival portal of Germany (Archivportal-D) which is forwarding the data to the Archives Portal Europe (APE). Due to some technical issues this chain doesn't work yet but probably will do soon.

**Pat Kelly** (Scottish Labour History Society): *Scotland's radical exports: the contribution of Scottish migrants to working class movements*

The paper will look at some examples of the contributions made by Scottish emigrants to the development of trade unions and working class parties in the main countries of the Scottish diaspora: the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Based upon my book, 'Kelly, P. *Scotland's Radical Exports: the Scots abroad – how they shaped politics and trade unions*, Grimsay Press, 2011', the paper is divided into three sections, corresponding to specific phases of emigration from Scotland.

The first looks at the influence of Scottish emigrants from the mid nineteenth century until the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The second section considers the role that Scots played in all four countries during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Post war immigration is the subject of the third section of the paper.

**Dr. Boris Belenkin** (International Historical Enlightenment, Charity and Human Rights Society "Memorial", Moscow): *"Memorial": New enlightenment and research projects*

In 2014 and 2015 Memorial's archive and museum have received many large private collections : letters, photos, reminiscences and documents, due to donations or the work of oral history project.

The materials held in the archive and museum (including audio and video materials) were used in educational working for exhibitions, web-based resources and books. Materials from Memorial's collections are used by numerous researchers: the main underlying principle of Society Memorial's archive is accessibility of its archive and library collections to the users. Numerous scientific publications include materials that Memorial had shared with researchers.

In 2014/2015, a most important event was the extension of the publication of the Memorial Archive collections on web-based resources. New items received by the archive and the museum (including those that the archive staff brought from their expeditions to places where GULAG sites had been

located) were presented on Memorial's website. The latest findings and additions include unknown documents on the Communist (bolchevik party) and many new important objects describing in a new way the life of the remote GULAG.

Some new history projects, very important in the educational activity of Memorial were related to commemoration work in 2014/2015. Academic seminars in 2015 "Resistance of Socialists and Anarchists to the Bolshevik Regime" included debates about historical figures, such as Lenin, Stalin, Bukharin and Trotsky. The scientific section continues the Study of the left opposition in the USSR (based on archive materials of the left opposition in USSR).

A new seminar "The History of Samizdat" has been running since February 2015. A movable exhibition "From Censorship and Samizdat to the Law on Press" presents Memorial materials and will open concurrently in Moscow and Paris in early October).

An overview of the actual situation in the Russian civil society. Political repressions. Witch-hunt. New repressive law which signify perhaps termination of the work of Non-Governmental Organizations NGOs (including those that focused on history education / awareness-building and human rights advocacy) under the new repressive laws.

**Dr. Tony Moore** (Monash University, Melbourne): *Death or Liberty: a digital 'transmedia' investigation of the political convicts transported to Australia*

'Death or Liberty' is a 'digital humanities' project creating a public online 'transmedia' portal and travelling digital exhibition bringing together international archives, convict records, journalism, art and institutions associated with the 3,600 political prisoners transported to Australia. The project expands on sources in my book *Death or Liberty: rebels and radicals transported to Australia* (2010), and its 2015 Australian/Irish/UK television documentary adaptation, by drawing on the collections of major museums and archives in Australia, Britain, Ireland, Canada and the US. The groups of political convicts include Scottish Jacobins of 1794, the Luddites, 500 rural 'Swing Rioters' from Southern England, the Tolpuddle Martyrs, the Canadian/American revolutionaries of 1837-1839, Chartists, and over 2000 Irish rebels.

The project asks how did the ideas, activism, media practice and punishment of the political prisoners transported to Australia (and Chartists and Young Irelanders who migrated freely), influence the early achievement of democracy in the unfree Australia convict colonies? In what ways can we discover and conceptualise the transnationality of the transported rebels and protesters political practice via digital data?; what is revealed about the relationship of media activism to political developments such as democracy, decolonisation, nationalism, labour and human rights?.

The interactive transmedia site, to be created by Roar Film (Australian co-producers of the documentary), is aimed at researchers, educators, students, activists, community groups and members of the public. It engages structurally, intellectually and aesthetically with the digital convergence of the scholarly text-based publication, text, sound and image archive collections, documentary, museum exhibitions, mapping and virtual locational tours. It uses transnational research collaboration, delivery and communication to explore the global mobility of the political prisoners, their activism, ideas, punishment, linking the UK-Ireland, Europe, North America and the wider empire to the Australian colonies. It emphasises the media and art of the radical activism for which the political prisoners were transported, synthesising the disciplines of political history with media studies, using today's digital media to explain to new audiences the media innovation of the past. The transmedia site draws on elements from the documentary film, notably its repertoire of songs written and performed by Billy Bragg, Ireland's Lisa O'Neill and Australia's Mick Thomas, and interviews with scholars, archive stills, and dramatic re-enactments.

**Prof. Leo Lucassen** (International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, and Leiden University): *Migrants and their heritage: how the daily lives of migrants change the historical interpretation of Europe's postwar migration history*

The history of guestworkers and colonial migrants is often interpreted in terms of victimhood, discrimination and exclusion. Guestworkers are often seen as passive objects of employers

interests and their need for cheap labour, whereas colonial migrants in countries like the UK, France, Portugal and the Netherlands are pictured as newcomers who suffered structural racial discrimination and marginalization in their new 'fatherlands'. When we gather their personal stories, photographs and other family heritage, however, a different image arises: much more nuanced, with more agency and less static. Especially the Dutch 'tracking migrants method' is ideally suited to systematically gather unique personal information that is a much needed humanistic counterweight against generalizing and deterministic histories from above.

**Dr. Cheryl Beredo** (Kheel Center, Cornell University): *Approaches to documenting migrant workers' experiences*

The Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives documents the world of work, with a focus on the United States in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. When initially formed in the 1940s to support the faculty and students of the newly established New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University, the Center collected current documents such as union constitutions and contracts, mediation records, arbitration awards, and management records to support teaching and research in American industrial and labor relations. Over the years as the School's teaching and research has expanded to cover workplace topics beyond New York and the United States, the Kheel Center, in its commitment to support the School's mission, has sought to increase international collaboration and collecting.

This paper provides an outline of some of the issues that make such work challenging, considering in particular the case of documenting migrant workers' heritage. The presentation considers several possible ways to document migrant workers' heritage, by examining traditional and emergent approaches to collecting other topics in use in the United States today. These approaches include documentation strategy, macro appraisal, post-custodial collecting, and web archiving. Keeping in mind some of the challenges particular to documenting migrant workers' experiences, how effectively might these ways of building archives address those challenges? Throughout, the paper will discuss the Kheel Center's past and current tactics to documenting migrant workers' experiences (e.g., inter-institutional cooperation, relationship development and new technologies) and share achievements, failures, and lessons learned.

While this presentation will outline issues, consider approaches, and suggest and evaluate strategies, hopefully it will also encourage discussion, dialogue, and an opportunity to learn about how institutional IALHI members are approaching this work and explore how we might work together.

**Dr. Marijke van Faassen** (Huygens Institute for the History of the Netherlands, The Hague): *Migrant: mobilities and connection*

Post-war migration from the Netherlands has many facets. This project focuses on migrants who moved to Australia and their life histories. These life histories can be reconstructed on the basis of the registration systems used at the time. Records were kept for the migrants from the moment they applied to the moment that they settled – and sometimes even long afterwards. They show how migrants fared after arriving in Australia. 'Migrant: Mobilities and Connection' is intended to allow for the comparison of different subgroups in a longitudinal perspective on the basis of e.g. origins, religion or health. By taking the migrants' cultural heritage on board, the project intends to cast new light on the circulation and adaptation of Dutch values in a new environment, and how these values – changed and enriched by new experiences – then found their way back to the Netherlands via the migrants' contacts with their country of origin.

The registration systems – a database with core data on over 50,000 migrant units (National Archives of the Netherlands) and Australian migrant files (National Archives Australia) – form the starting point for the research project. By linking these records we constitute a new 'data-backbone' with life courses of the migrants. The resulting dataset covers almost all Dutch migrants to Australia from 1945 to 1990. This makes it possible to link other datasets with relevant information on a personal level, enriching the data backbone from a number of different angles. For example, labor unions, migrant organizations and churches from both countries have files about the migrants they

assisted. It also has a 'digital safe function' for the Dutch-Australian migrant community. Together with cultural heritage institutions, they are invited to supplement and improve the database via crowd sourcing, but also provide new research material by sharing digitized sources such as photographs, journals and memorabilia.

**Dr. Louisa Zanoun** (Génériques (France) Paris): *Collecting and disseminating migrants' memory through digital technology: the example of Génériques*

Across the world of research and culture (universities, museums, archive centres, libraries...), digital technology has changed the way in which archival sources are presented. Indeed, it has become apparent that the dissemination of sources is being increasingly mediated through web platforms and tools such as social media or online exhibitions. While some would argue that this dissemination has changed dramatically the way research and cultural institutions collect and share material, others argue that digital technology have had little or no effect..

As a research and cultural organisation which in 2009 launched Odysseo, the first digital catalogue and portal on immigration history (<http://odysseo.generiques.org/>), the nonprofit organisation Génériques has a long and vast experience in the field of collecting, sharing and disseminating archival sources. In 2013, Génériques initiated a 2-year long oral history project which explores the history and memories of immigrant activism in France between 1968 and 1988. The aim of the project is to produce video recordings of immigrant and non-immigrant men and women who participated in protest movements and collective action to promote equal rights for immigrants and their families in 1970s and 1980s France. At the end of the project, the recordings will be deposited in the French national archives for preservation, and at the library-museum *Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine* (BDIC) for consultation. With regards to dissemination, extracts of the recordings will be available on Odysseo, as well as in online exhibitions. As of today, Génériques has produced three online exhibitions in partnership with the Google Cultural Institute; all feature recordings from the oral history project. A fourth exhibition, focusing on Franco-German labour and social history 1968-1990, is in preparation.

By focusing on those online exhibitions, which partly rely on oral archival sources, this presentation will seek to understand if and how digital technology has affected the way Génériques collects and disseminates immigrants' heritage and memory. What is more, this paper will ask how the partnership with the Google Cultural Institute, a recent but already a major player in the field of heritage, has given Génériques new and innovative opportunities to disseminate its work to a wider public.

**Nina Trige Andersen** (Lynxtext, Denmark): *A Philippine history of Denmark*

Philippine workers have for half a century been part of the Danish labor market, yet not been paid much attention by neither labor history nor migration studies. Venturing into "the politics of historical memory"(Mabalon 2013), the archival project A Philippine History of Denmark seeks to transform histories of Filipinas/os in Denmark into History by collecting documents, artefacts, photos, and oral history related to migration routes, labor import and -export, work life, social and religious networks, migrant associations and labor union participation in-between Denmark and the Philippines.

Workers from the Philippines have migrated to Denmark in three major waves: during the "guest worker" era 1960-1973 came The Filipino Pioneers, as they called themselves. In late 1973, a so-called immigration stop was adopted in Denmark, fundamentally changing the conditions of migration. From the late 1970s, primarily female workers from the Philippines have migrated to Denmark, and primarily through marriage. From the late 1990s a third wave of Filipinas – in unprecedented numbers – came through the au pair program.

These generations of migrants have in many ways always been contemporary, in motion, a community happening but never settling into the fabric of official history. Collecting the archive entails tracing the different waves of migrants, and asking them to lend out or donate what has not already been lost. Particularly documenting the Filipino Pioneers' generation is of urgency. The archival efforts include reconstructing the archive of the labor union that historically has organised the majority of Philippine workers in Denmark: The hotel- and restaurant workers' union

(HRF/RBF/3F). Not just Philippine workers, but also this sector has been neglected by labor and migration research, and only fragments of the labor union files has been submitted to/preserved at existing archives. The archive will eventually be made available to the public.

**Dr. Sue Morrison** (Scottish Oral History Centre, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow): *Migrant Histories: Some challenges and rewards when capturing migrant experiences*

**Emmy Tither** (Bishopsgate Institute, London): *Interesting stories and awesome people: outreach and community engagement with the 'Everyday Muslim' project*

Everyday Muslim is a project to create an archive of Muslim lives, arts, education and cultures from throughout the UK. Through the collection of oral history interviews, images and documents, the project aims to document lived experience. The Muslim community does not have an established history of recordkeeping in the UK, especially when it comes to the history and heritage of everyday life. Therefore, it is also the goal of the project to give the Muslim community ownership of its past, present and future through the establishment of said archive. All members of the Islamic community are encouraged to contribute their stories to the project.

So far, Everyday Muslim has collected over 30 interviews, as well as numerous photos and documents. Two exhibitions have been on display: the 'Muslim Front Room' at Vestry House Museum and 'We Weren't Expecting to Stay?' at Bishopsgate Institute, a partner in the project. Another exhibit, 'We Weren't Expecting to Stay and Other Stories' ran at Vestry House Museum until 17 May. Community outreach events have been run to allow the community to share their stories as well as oral history training workshops with students from George Mitchell School in Leytonstone. The Everyday Muslim Symposium took place on 31 January bringing together academics and artists, fostering cross disciplinary discussion about Muslim heritage, its importance and its preservation.

The presentation at the IALHI conference will focus on our experience performing community outreach as well as the trials and successes of creating an archive from scratch. It will also present a short summary of our findings, with examples from the collected interviews and images. It is a great opportunity to share our experiences with others, as well as learn from fellow projects. Furthermore, keeping with the theme of the conference, the presentation will tie in our experiences in community outreach with labour history-focused stories collected by the project, especially those presented in our exhibitions. Examples include: the experience of South Asian migrants in the 60s, women-owned home businesses and families living/working apart due to financial need. These will be contrasted with modern day work and labour experiences, especially those of young British-born Muslims.

**Dr. Christian Koller** (Swiss Social Archives, Zürich): *Migrant workers in Swiss strike archives*

Switzerland has traditionally had a high influx of migrant workers, especially in the periods between 1880 and 1914 and since 1945. Many of them joined the trade unions and got actively involved in strike actions. Archival holdings on strike events in Switzerland thus often include documents relating to migrant workers. The proposed presentation will explore the types and contents of such documents and relate them to current research in the field

**Evelyne Morel and Pierre François de Massot** (Centre d'Études et the Recherches sur les Mouvements Trotskyste et Révolutionnaires Internationaux, Paris): *L'émigration algérienne dans la vie politique et sociale en France*

Le fait que l'Algérie ait été, depuis la conquête coloniale dans la première moitié du XIXe siècle, une colonie de peuplement et que le pays lui-même n'ait pas connu un développement économique autonome a entraîné une large émigration en France —surtout après la première guerre mondiale — entraînant, par centaines de milliers, des paysans déracinés et sans terre à s'intégrer dans l'industrie française.

Le même phénomène vaut, mais à une moindre échelle et dans des rapports plus complexes, pour le Maroc et la Tunisie, tous deux protectorats français.

Le résultat, c'est que d'une part le développement du prolétariat en France comprend, très tôt, un fort contingent de travailleurs d'origine maghrébine (en particulier algérienne). Que d'autre part, les organisations nationalistes — tout spécialement l'Etoile nord-africaine — se développent en métropole et tendent à devenir, du même coup, une composante des luttes politiques et sociales en France.

Les organisations nationalistes apporteront leur appui au Front unique qui se constitue à partir de 1934 entre le PCF et le PS. Mais c'est le gouvernement de Front populaire (PS et Radicaux soutenu par le PCF) qui dissoudra les organisations nationalistes du Maghreb, en utilisant contre elles les décrets-lois institués pour répondre à la menace des milices fascistes.

Après 1945, l'organisation nationaliste algérienne, PPA, puis MTLD, sera de toutes les luttes de la classe ouvrière française, participant notamment aux rassemblements sous l'égide des organisations syndicales, comme par exemple lors des défilés du 1<sup>er</sup> mai. Mais ils y participent avec leurs propres mots d'ordre reliés au droit des peuples à disposer d'eux-mêmes, et donc à la revendication de l'indépendance.

Parfois, dans ces cortèges, malgré la répression policière et le silence à ce sujet des organisateurs de ces manifestations, les militants brandissent leur propre drapeau. C'est ainsi que lors d'une manifestation le 14 juillet 1953, 7 travailleurs algériens, qui brandissaient le drapeau de leur pays tombent sous les balles.

Après le 1<sup>er</sup> novembre 1954, comme on le sait, le mouvement nationaliste algérien se scinde en deux : le Mouvement national algérien (MNA) et le Front de libération nationale (FLN). Cette division a de profondes répercussions en France même, où les militants algériens se trouvent placés, dès les premiers mois de l'insurrection, dans des conditions de répression très dures.

Dans les premières années, le MNA, qui comporte une phalange de militants ouvriers expérimentés, et qui joue un grand rôle dans la vie syndicale, est très nettement l'organisation majoritaire dans l'émigration.

Rappelons aussi, du point de vue du rôle de l'émigration algérienne en France, qu'au moment des grandes grèves qui mobilisent la classe ouvrière en 1955, le MNA lance un appel montrant la solidarité et l'unité qui existent entre le combat du peuple algérien pour ses droits et la lutte de la classe ouvrière en France.

C'est à elle que l'on doit l'initiative, lors du 1<sup>er</sup> mai 1956 de faire que massivement, les travailleurs algériens quittent démonstrativement le rassemblement organisé par la CGT, dans la mesure où la direction de celle-ci refusait de donner la parole à un représentant du mouvement national.

Ce sont alors les militants du MNA qui seront à l'origine de la constitution du premier syndicat de travailleurs algériens — avant que le FLN ne constitue à son tour une UGTA (Union générale des travailleurs algériens). Il s'agit de l'USTA (Union syndicale des travailleurs algériens), dont les principaux dirigeants comptent des personnalités marquantes de l'histoire du mouvement nationaliste algérien comme Abdallah Filali.

La lutte fratricide entre les deux ailes du nationalisme algérien conduit, en pleine guerre de libération, à son affaiblissement en France. Par exemple, Abdallah Filali sera assassiné par des tueurs se réclamant du FLN. Cet assassinat sera suivi de beaucoup d'autres dont ceux des principaux dirigeants de l'USTA : Hocine Maroc, Ahmed Bekhat, Ahmed Semmache.

Les militants trotskystes ont soutenu dès le début la lutte des militants nationalistes pour l'indépendance et ont combattu la répression organisée par le gouvernement français contre les travailleurs algériens avant et pendant la guerre d'Algérie. Ils ont participé avec des militants et des personnalités diverses à la défense des militants algériens emprisonnés, de Messali Hadj en particulier. C'est pourquoi la fille de Messali Hadj a confié à notre centre, le CERMTRI, une partie des archives de son père, archives qui témoignent de ce combat. Nous avons mis en ligne le catalogue de ces documents qui sont consultables dans notre centre.

D'autre part, nous venons de recevoir les archives de maître Yves Dechezelles, avocat et militant pour la défense des droits de l'homme, qui a défendu de nombreux militants nationalistes en particuliers algériens. Ces archives sont en cours de classement.

**Stefan Länzlinger** (Swiss Social Archive, Zürich): *'Una condizione Umana'* (Switzerland, c. 1965, English: *'A human condition'*): a rare cinematic testimony of Italian immigration to Switzerland

The film "Una condizione umana" shows an Italian migrant worker spending his free Sunday on a summer day in Lucerne. The unnamed man strolls through the city, visits attractions and restaurant and tries to get in contact with local people. But whatever he does, nothing can improve his sad, melancholy mood. After a few hours he leaves the town, awaiting another six days of exhausting work.

"Una condizione umana" is so far known the only cinematic self-testimony of Italian immigration in Switzerland. Very little is known about its genesis. The film likely was made in the mid-1960s and shows some of the main problems Italian workers were confronted with in Switzerland at that time: isolation, language barriers, lack of social and emotional bonds.

The paper presents film excerpts and discusses the political background that led to this film. To control the number of foreign workers living in Switzerland, in 1934 the authorities enacted the so called "Saisonnierstatut": Staying in Switzerland was allowed only for nine months of a year, in the remaining three months workers had to return to their country of origin. Family reunification was not allowed. After World War II, the Swiss economy had an enormous need of foreign workers, and mostly unemployed people from Italy emigrated to Switzerland. Their situation has been critically discussed since the 1960s. "Una condizione umana" contributes to the discussion from the view of the migrant workers themselves.