

Call for workshop proposals

**Voluntary Work, Volunteering and Voluntary Associations in Serbia and Slovenia (and Neighbouring Countries), 1980-2000**

Workshop at the Research Center of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU)

Ljubljana, 22nd-23rd March 2018

‘Volunteering’, within the context of European communist regimes after 1945, has traditionally been associated with the voluntary, i.e. unpaid, work campaigns for the construction of railways, roads, schools. This was of substantial relevance, in particular during the decades of post-war reconstruction, though the appeal to sacrifice free time for unpaid social activities remained a constant feature up until the end of the communist regimes. After the downfall of communism, studies from the broad field of transformation research have tended to identify consistently lower levels of volunteering in these societies when compared with the Western societies. Within this framework of thinking, it is conventionally considered that volunteerism as such ceased to exist during communism and that the activities of traditional charities and associations were fully replaced by state- and party-controlled mass organisations. Some scholars, however, have shown that communist authorities did not abolish organised volunteerism altogether, but, on the contrary, used it as one among other institutional bases on which to construct a socialist society and to bind less committed sections of the population to the system.

The workshop focuses on the forms and experiences of volunteering activities and voluntary associations in the last two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We encourage papers from a range different disciplines, including history (e.g. micro-, local-, legal history), social anthropology, sociology, gender or intersectional studies, among others. There is a particular interest in papers that address the following topics and questions:

- The durability and activities of “traditional” prewar associations, such as the Red Cross or sport, alpine, hunting, and firefighting associations during the late and post-socialist period or during violent or non-violent transitions.
- The practices and importance of voluntary associations established after 1945 in late and post socialism.
- The role and transformation of volunteering and voluntary work under different economic and political systems (material and human resources etc.).
- The role of associations during the transformation of the political system (e.g. the political mobilisation of volunteers).
- Structural changes to voluntary associations (the legal framework, leadership structures, subordination and relative autonomy).
- The position of “old” associations vs. new types of organisations (NGOs etc.) and new forms of activism in the 1980s and 1990s.

- Social practices and the importance of volunteering and voluntary associations on the level of local communities (their social and cultural role, places of inclusion or exclusion).
- “Experienced history”: what does it mean to be a volunteer?
- The importance of voluntary association in (trans)national and (multi)regional building processes.

Please email an abstract of your paper of maximum 400 words along with a brief biography including main publications (maximum 1 page) to Ana Kladnik: kladnik@zzf-potsdam.de by 15<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

Notification of acceptance will be announced by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017.

In order to facilitate deeper discussion, participants will be asked to submit their papers (maximum 3,000 words) before the conference, by 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018. Each paper will then be sent to a commentator and to the other workshop participants. The presentation at the workshop should be no longer than 15 minutes.

This workshop is the first of the three regional workshops (Ljubljana in March 2018, Brno in November 2018, Dresden in March 2019) organised by the Hannah Arendt Institute for Research on Totalitarianism at the TU Dresden and the Institute for East European History at the University of Vienna. The workshop in Ljubljana is organised in cooperation with the Institute of Culture and Memory Studies ZRC SAZU Ljubljana. Travel and accommodation costs of the participants will be covered by the organisers.

The workshop is part of the project *Volunteering in Local Communities between Late Socialism and Liberal Capitalism: The History of Volunteer Fire Departments in Germany and East Central Europe, 1980-2000*, which is supported by the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, DFG) and the Austrian Science Fund (*Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung*, FWF).

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