CALL for PAPERS

Histories of Sustainability in Europe:
Discourses and Practices Before and After 1989

Date: November 15-16, 2018
Organizer: Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe,
Institute for Contemporary History Munich-Berlin, University of Augsburg
Venue: Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe, Marburg
Deadline: August 1, 2018

The workshop “Histories of Sustainability in Europe: Discourses and Practices Before and After 1989” to be held on 15-16 November 2018 in Marburg is part of the project “Histories of Sustainability – Discourses and Practices since the 1970s” funded by the Leibniz Association and run by the Institute for Contemporary History Munich-Berlin (Elke Seefried) in cooperation with the Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe, Marburg (Christian Lotz) and the University of Augsburg (Marita Krauss, Jens Soentgen).

Sustainability as a word started its wider usage career in the 1970s with the documents and conferences prepared by United Nations. Only few decades later in the 21st century sustainability has already become a buzz word with its meaning being vague and very much dependent on the context. Therefore, the core aim of the conference is to focus on the immense transformation of the sustainability discourse from its routes in forestry to the usage in almost every field of the human activity nowadays. What exactly have various actors and their policies meant by sustainability in particular European cases from the second half of the 20th century? How were discourses and practices of sustainability influenced by political and social transformations in Eastern and Western Europe after 1989?

In order to answer these questions, several approaches could be used:
1) analyzing local sustainability discourses and practices in particular case studies of a community/city/institution/company etc.
2) historicizing the usage of sustainability discourse over a particular period and/or geographical range
3) looking at the power relations in which a certain understanding of sustainability was adopted.

The following questions could be addressed in presentations:
» What role did particular contexts of environmental policies and practices play in shaping a specific discourse of sustainability at various levels in Western and Eastern Europe since the 1970s?
» Aspects of sustainability in the transformations of environments in particular during the political changes of 1989/90 - what were the main ideas, actors, and policies?
» How are/were local understandings and shared meanings of sustainability formed? Do they differ at different levels and how/why?
» Politization cases of the environmental policies - how subsequently were (if) the understandings of sustainability changed?
» What are the linguistic and/or historical specificities of the concept of sustainability? How did they form?
We invite applications of PhD-students and Post-Docs. Please send your application to the workshop until August 1, 2018 via email to sabina.kubeke@herder-institut.de.

Each application should consist of an abstract of the planned presentation (up to 3,000 characters) and a short CV (including contact details). Applicants will be informed about their participation in the workshop by the beginning of September 2018 the latest. All successful applicants will have to submit a short paper (up to 15,000 characters) before the workshop. We kindly ask all participants to act as respondents to a specific paper of their colleague in the workshop with having comments and questions prepared in advance.

We are expecting to have around 20 participants in the workshop. The working language of the workshop is English. Costs for travel and accommodation will be covered by the organizers.

For questions or more information, please contact Sabina Kubeke sabina.kubeke@herder-institut.de