



## Conference

### **Self-Management in Action: Worker Cooperatives and Employee-Owned Enterprises in Western Europe after 1945**

**Centre for Contemporary History, Potsdam, Germany  
24th to 25th September 2015**

**Venue:**

Centre for Contemporary History Potsdam (ZZF Potsdam)  
Seminar Room (Ground Floor)  
Am Neuen Markt 9d  
14467 Potsdam  
Germany

**Convener:**

Dr. Anne Sudrow, Centre for Contemporary History Potsdam

**Supported by:**

Stiftung Bildung und Wissenschaft

**Conference language:**

English

**Registration:**

The number of participants is limited, so we request all those interested in taking part to register beforehand (before 18 September) via e-mail to:  
Dr. Anne Sudrow (ZZF Potsdam): [sudrow@zzf-pdm.de](mailto:sudrow@zzf-pdm.de)

About the Conference:

The United Nations declared 2012 the International Year of Cooperatives. As a consequence, in European business history, too, cooperatives attracted considerable attention. In the wake of an increasing interest in the history of consumption and in the mediating actors between consumers and producers in the market economies, studies on consumer co-operatives and their impact on consumer choice and consumption patterns followed. Producer cooperatives

and democratically managed enterprises, however, suffered from the 'death of the production paradigm' in economic and social history. They have been thoroughly neglected by historical research in the recent past. It is this particular type of businesses in the secondary, industrial sector and their history that the conference will focus on: factories and workshops 'under workers' control' or 'producer cooperatives', as they were mostly called until the 1970s. During the 1970s this model of employee-control and employee-ownership came to be known throughout Europe under the term of 'self-management' ('Selbstverwaltung', 'autogestion', etc.) Research into this largely disregarded and empirically diverse field can connect aspects of the business history of mostly small and medium sized industrial firms with a culturally informed history of production. Such research can investigate the history of the new social movements and their social visions with regard to their particular economic forms of political practice.

## Conference Programme

### Thursday, 24th September 2015

13.30-14.00            Welcome and Introduction

14.00-15.30            **Panel 1:            Southern Europe since 1945**  
(Chair: Christopher Neumaier)

**Tito Menzani**, University of Bologna:

«We have no Master, except the Generation of the Future». Worker Cooperatives in Italy (1945-2015): a Critical Analysis

**Fernando Molina**, University of the Basque Country, Bilbao:

Regarding Arizmendiarieta: The Social History of Mondragon through the Looking-Glass of the «Founding Father»

15.30-16.00            Coffee break

16.00-17.30            **Panel 2:            Eastern European Precedents**  
(Chair: Matthias Judt)

**Maciej Tymiński**, University of Warsaw:

Rise and Fall of Self-Government Enterprises in Poland (1956-1958). The Case of the Cable Factory in Ożarów Mazowiecki

**Josip Mihaljević**, Croatian Institute of History:

Yugoslav Self-Management in Practice (1965-1974). A Case Study of the Gredelj Rolling Stock Factory

17.30-17.45            Coffee break



14.00-15.30

**Panel 6: Researching Current Developments**  
(Chair: Rüdiger Graf)

**Hanna Moilanen**, University of Eastern Finland:

Worker Cooperatives in Finland – Means of Managing a Precarious Working Life

**Juan Pablo Hudson**, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET),  
Argentina:

Companies Recovered by Workers in Argentina: a Balance of 15 years of Self-Management  
from two Case Studies in Rosario City

15.30-16.30

**Final discussion**