

# A digital space for labour history 2021

While we wait for the XV. Nordic Labour History Conference in Copenhagen, Jan. 26-30, 2022:

**Nordic Labour History Network** invites you to a series of lectures, roundtables and work-labs online – check out the program in the following pages

If you have proposals for online events within the framework of Nordic Labour History Network, please contact [nlhc.cph@gmail.com](mailto:nlhc.cph@gmail.com)



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[www.nordiclabourhistory.org](http://www.nordiclabourhistory.org)  
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# The Jewish Labour Bund in Sweden – an unknown experience

- **Date:** March 30, 2021
- **Time:** 14.00-14.45 CET
- **Format:** Lecture
- **Presenter:** Håkan Blomqvist
- **Abstract:** Organized by Jewish refugees from camps in Poland and Germany and transmigrants from the Soviet Union, Bundists gathered to rebuild their non-zionist worker's party around socialism and Yiddishkeit after the Second World War. Swedish labour history, as well as Swedish Jewish history, has for a long time ignored the existence of the Jewish Labour Bund in Sweden. How did the Bundists in Sweden try to orient themselves in the new world of emigration, cold war and the coming of Israel after the Holocaust and personal traumas? Håkan Blomqvist presents his new book based on archival research in the collections at YIVO, Institute for Jewish Research, in New York, which contains an archive from Bundist groups in Sweden during the post war decade from 1945 that has not been used earlier.
- **Registration:** [Click here](#)

# The most equal country in the world? The history of Swedish egalitarianism

- **Date:** April 20, 2021
- **Time:** 14.00-14.45 CET
- **Format:** Lecture
- **Presenter:** Erik Bengtsson
- **Abstract:** During the 20th century, Sweden became known as a country with an unusually egalitarian distribution of income and wealth, an encompassing welfare state, and an exceptionally strong social democracy. It is commonplace among historians and social scientists to consider these equal outcomes of the 20th century as the logical end-result of a much longer historical trajectory of egalitarianism, from early modern free peasant farmers or from a peculiar Swedish political culture that was egalitarian and consensus-oriented. Erik Bengtsson questions the Swedish interpretation of *Sonderweg*. In 1900, Sweden had some of the most unequal voting laws in western Europe, and more severe economic inequality than the United States. This throws the purported continuity from early modern equality to social democratic equality into question. The roots of 20th century Swedish egalitarianism instead lie in exceptionally well-organized popular movements after 1870, with a strong egalitarian counter-hegemonic culture and unusually broad popular participation in politics.
- **Registration:** [Click here](#)

# Nordic labour history for the 21st century – orientations and re-orientations

- **Date:** April 27, 2021
- **Time:** 14.00-15.30 CET
- **Format:** Roundtable
- **Presenters:** Knut Kjeldstadli, University of Oslo; Ragnheiður Kristjánsdóttir, University of Iceland; Malin Nilsson, Lund University; Pirjo Markkola, Tampere University, Nina Trige Andersen, Society for Labour History, Copenhagen
- **Chair:** Silke Neunsinger, Swedish Labour Movement's Archives and Library
- **Abstract:** There is evidence of renewed interest in the history of Nordic co-operation to write the shared histories of the Nordic countries but also of the Nordic region as such. The shared history of the labour history institutes has contributed to a long-standing tradition of collaboration between labour historians and activists in the Nordic countries going back to the beginning of the 20th century. The Nordic Labour History Network (NLHN) builds on this collaboration to strengthen cross-Nordic research collaboration within the field of labour and social history. NLHN wants to encourage to expand ideas of what can be understood as part of the history of labour, of workers and of workers' movements in time and space. During this roundtable representatives from the different Nordic countries take stock of the current state of labour history and discuss what future Nordic labour history needs to do.
- **Registration:** [Click here](#)

# Shades of Red: Evolution of the Political Language of Finnish Socialism, 1895–1917

- **Date:** May 11, 2021
- **Time:** 14.00-14.45 CET
- **Format:** Lecture
- **Presenter:** Risto Turunen
- **Abstract:** While the first wave of quantitative studies of labour history focused on "hard" numerical sources, nowadays it is also possible to analyze large datasets of machine-readable texts computationally. A simple method from corpus linguistics will be introduced as an example. The computational analysis of Finnish labour press shows its surprisingly wide conceptual variation over time. This would be difficult to grasp with more traditional methods. According to the main argument, the political language of socialism is not an autonomous system but constantly changes in interaction with its complex societal environment. In addition to describing and explaining the major trends of the evolution of Finnish socialism, the lecture also comments on the prospects and pitfalls of "digital turn" for the future study of proletarian imaginations.
- **Registration:** [Click here](#)

# A Century of Working Women in Iceland

- **Date:** May 18, 2021
- **Time:** 14.00-14.45 CET
- **Format:** Lecture
- **Presenters:** Erla Hulda Halldórsdóttir and Ragnheiður Kristjánsdóttir
- **Abstract:** The talk will be based on the newly published and award-winning book, *A Century of Women Voters* (co-authors, Kristín Svava Tómasdóttir and Þorgerður H Þorvaldsdóttir). The book discusses the life and political environment of Icelandic female voters. It tells the story of how women carved out a space for themselves to make, create, and determine the course of their own lives and that of society as a whole, while at the same time overcoming the obstacles they found at every turn. The narrative revolves around the question of when women became fully fledged citizens, and it is structured around parliamentary elections. The authors chose one election year for each decade, from 1916, the first elections after women won the right to vote, to 2017. By focusing on eleven election years, we get cross-section of the political history of women over the one hundred years of women's suffrage in Iceland, as well as a narrative of progression, of what changed and how. In the talk the authors shall be focusing on the politics of women's work.
- **Registration:** [Click here](#)

# Arctic land Indigenous Labour History – Lessons from Canada

- **Date:** June 8, 2021
- **Time:** 18.00-20.00 CET
- **Format:** Roundtable
- **Abstract:** Until today only Norway and Denmark are among the 23 countries which have ratified the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No 169 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). While appearing as models for labour relations worldwide, little interest has been paid by scholars to working and living conditions of indigenous people in the Nordic countries. This panel is the first in a series of online events to initiate and promote discussions about Arctic and indigenous labour history, organized by the NLHN.  
Our Canadian colleagues Sarah A Nickel and Joan Sangster will share their experiences of writing indigenous labour history. Following their discussion, we will listen to comments from historians representing Sápmi, Greenland and Iceland; what can we learn from them and what needs to be done in Nordic labour history
- **Chair:** Helle Stenum
- **Participants**

**Marianne Jensen**, first female mayor of Ilulissat. She was also a minister in the government of Greenland and the chief technical advisor in promoting ILO policy on indigenous peoples.

**Åsa Nordin Jonsson**, independent scholar with a PhD in history. Author of [\*Relationer i ett samiskt samhälle: en studie av skötesrensensystemet i Gällivare socken under första hälften av 1900-talet\*](#), Umeå University (2002).

**Sarah A Nickel** is Tk'emlupsemc (Kamloops Secwepemc), French Canadian and Ukrainian. She grew up in the unceded lands of northern Secwepemcul'ecw and the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Associate professor at the University of Alberta. Author of *Assembling Unity. Indigenous politics, gender and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs*, UBC Press (2019).

**Joan Sangster**, professor emerita of Gender and Women's Studies, Trent University. Editor of the Canadian labour history journal *Labour/LeTravail*. Author of *The Iconic North. Cultural Constructions of Aboriginal Life in Postwar Canada*, UBC Press (2016).