

**Workshop program:**  
**The role of users in global technological history**

**University of Bern  
Historical Institute  
June 14-15, 2018**



**Thursday, June 14**

**Unitobler, Room: F-121**

9.30-10.45

**Historical and theoretical concepts of users**

**Christiane Berth** (University of Bern)/**Yovanna Pineda** (University of Central Florida):

Introduction

**Clapperton Mavhunga** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology):

Strategic deployments: usefulness, fit-for-purpose, and the African technological

10.45-11.15

*Coffee Break*

11.15-12.45

**Knowledge through technology-in-use and technical education**

**Yovanna Pineda** (University of Central Florida):

Reaping modernity: farm technology use and development in Argentina, 1850-1918

**Suvobrata Sarkar** (University of Burdwan):

Building a 'user-focused history' of technical knowledge: gleanings from India's colonial past and the College of Engineering & Technology, Jadavpur

12.45-14.15

*Lunch*

14:15-15:45

**Modifying global technology narratives**

**Madhumita Saha** (Noida International University):

Global narrative of the Green Revolution and the challenges it faced from its Indian users, late 1960s to early 1970s

**Jethron Ayumbah Akallah** (Technische Universität Darmstadt):

Walking the thin line: the technological triad in urban water and sanitation provisioning for Nairobi, 1963 to 1975

15:45-16:15

*Coffee break*

16:15-17:30

**Planning and networking session**

18:00

*Apéro*

**Friday, June 15      Unitobler, Room: F-121**

9:30 – 11:00

**Users' strategies: technology appropriation, self-help and social organization**

**Robert Heinze** (University of Bern):

Public transport for whom? "Informal" transport as a user reaction to the failure of colonial infrastructure in Léopoldville/Kinshasa, 1950s-60s

**Christiane Berth** (University of Bern):

First ignored, then exploited: Mexican telephone users between service deficiencies, technological change and privatization in Mexico, 1980-1995

11:00-11.30

*Coffee break*

11:30-13:00

**Methodological concerns: identifying users in historical sources**

**Ricarda Musser** (Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut PK, Berlin):

The role of users in popularizing new technological developments through Brazil's illustrated magazines (1889-1930): the case of the car

**Diana J. Montaña** (Washington University, St. Louis):

Washed out users: maids, middle-class housewives, and *electrodomésticos* in Mexico City

13:00-14:30

*Lunch*

14:30-16:30

**Final roundtable**

**Leida Fernández-Prieto** (National Spanish Research Council)

**Mikael Hård** (Technische Universität Darmstadt)

**Suzanne Moon** (University of Oklahoma)

**Amalia Ribí Forclaz** (The Graduate Institute Geneva)

19:00

*Dinner*

## Working format & registration

The work of the invited speakers represents diverse global regions, methodologies, and challenges to the understanding of users of technologies across the world. The discussions will be based on pre-circulated papers submitted in advance. At the final roundtable, experts from the fields of global history, technological history, history of knowledge and the history of development will share their observations on the papers. Registration is required as the papers will be distributed in advance to enable informed discussion. The deadline for registration is **June 4, 2018**.

For registration and further information, please contact: [christiane.berth@hist.unibe.ch](mailto:christiane.berth@hist.unibe.ch)

The workshop program will take place at:



Unitobler, Universität Bern  
Lerchenweg 36  
3012 Bern  
**Room F-121**



From Bern train station, you can reach Unitobler by bus no. 12 in the direction of "Länggasse" in about 10 minutes. From the stops "Mittelstrasse" or "Unitobler" the conference room is only a few minutes walk away.