

Call for Papers

Österreichischer Zeitgeschichtetag

History in the Making.

05–07 April 2018

Department of
Contemporary History
University of Vienna



universität
wien

Department of
Contemporary History

ZGT
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Since it was launched in 1993, the “Austrian Conference on Contemporary History” (Zeitgeschichtetag, ZGT) has developed into a renowned forum for critical debate between Austrian and international historians working in the field of contemporary history and functions as an important platform for networking and exchange in the discipline.

Now in its 25th year, the “ZGT18” will take place from 05–07 April 2018 and is hosted by the Department of Contemporary History at the University of Vienna. With the title “History in the Making”, this year’s conference will focus on social change in the present.

In an opinion poll conducted in Austria in 2017, some 40 percent of respondents expressed the feeling that everything was falling “into disarray”. Evidently a new historical overview is called for, and contemporary history must apply itself to the task of contextualising current events. However, at the same time, research in contemporary history should not neglect questions that are not currently the focus of social concern. “ZGT18” therefore invites proposals for papers that respond to changed social parameters. The aim is to provide a platform for innovative projects and fresh methodological approaches that contribute new aspects to existing knowledge in contemporary history.

Zeitgeschichtetag 2018

“ZGT18” is structured around five themes:

Theme 1	Contemporary History as History of the Present
Theme 2	Contemporary History, Methodology, and Theory
Theme 3	Contemporary History and its Social Relevance
Theme 4	International and Transnational Contemporary History
Theme 5	Open Space

Theme 1 **Contemporary History as History of the Present**

Understanding contemporary history as the history of the present allows for current trends and developments in politics, society, law, and culture to be observed in the context of their historical development. Using the model of the long twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the First and Second World Wars, the Holocaust, the Cold War, as well as developments since 1989/1991 can be seen as part of a longer-term process characterised by a complex constellation of ruptures, continuities, and transformations. What were the historical influences at work in the nineteenth century which determined the twentieth century politically, socially, legally, and culturally? In turn, how is the previous century continuing to exert an influence now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, thus shaping the present?

Theme 2 **Contemporary History, Methodology, and Theory**

In recent years, connections to current theoretical debates, for example in transnational history or gender studies, have opened up new perspectives on processes in contemporary history, allowing new questions to emerge regarding different actors and their spheres of agency, mobility and migration. Methodological innovations and developments have taken place in the fields of oral history, visual history, and the digital humanities, as well as in recent cultural and political history. Aside from the ever-relevant question of periodisation in contemporary history, focus has increasingly moved to the theoretical and methodological implications of contemporary processes of change brought about by digitalisation, the “disappearance of the generation of contemporary witnesses”, and the internationalisation of research contexts.

Theme 3

Contemporary History and its Social Relevance

For a long time in the German-speaking world, contemporary history was understood as having a role to play in the democratisation of post-war society. Engaging critically with the National Socialist regime was intended to promote reflexivity and to counter authoritarian attitudes. Three generations later, what is the socio-political function of the discipline today? Is contemporary history becoming public history as well? Can and should the production and dissemination of orientation knowledge continue to concentrate on the first half of the twentieth century? How do representatives of the field communicate with the wider public, and which specific themes and approaches help us to better understand current phenomena such as the surge in nationalist movements, heightened conflicts over the distribution of wealth, migration flows, and unrealised promises of emancipation?

Theme 4

International and Transnational Contemporary History

Contemporary historical phenomena cross geographical and political boundaries in manifold ways. Organisations, individuals, and discourses cannot always be clearly located geographically, while developments in individual nation states can often only be explained through comparison to similar phenomena in other geographical areas. This theme invites proposals that focus on these spatial limitations and demarcations and engage with questions in contemporary history from an international or transnational perspective. Such studies should consider at least one of the following points: locating phenomena relating to the nation state within their international contexts; an investigation of the relationships of exchange between nation states; research on international organisations; analysis of transnational actors and discourses; focus on developments in postcolonial spaces; and international and transnational comparisons.

Theme 5

Open Space

The Open Space at "ZGT18" presents a platform for all presentations where the subject matter does not fit into any of the four stipulated themes and/or where the format will not work within the traditional panel structure. Provided that there is an explicit connection to contemporary history, we invite individual as well as group proposals for scholarly and/or artistic presentations of up to 90 minutes. All applicants are requested to justify why they should be allocated to the Open Space and to stipulate their technical requirements.

How to Apply

Applications can be submitted for individual papers or for complete panels. Individual proposals will be organised thematically into panels by the conference organisers. Multiple proposals are not permitted. Applicants wishing to present a paper may also be nominated to chair one other panel. Applicants may suggest chairs, otherwise chairs will be appointed by the conference organisers. Submissions should address one theme and abstracts should stipulate which aspects of the theme will be addressed.

Panel Structure with Three Presentations:

Three 20-minute presentations, 30 minutes for discussion

Panel Structure with Four Presentations:

Four 15-minute presentations, 30 minutes for discussion

Submissions should include one abstract per presentation and a short biography (maximum 1,000 characters each, including spaces). Panel submissions require an additional brief description of the overarching theme (maximum 1,000 characters, including spaces).

Submissions can be made from 01 August 2017 to 15 September 2017 at:

<https://zgt18.univie.ac.at>

The conference languages will be German and English.

Acceptance

The acceptance of submissions will be decided by a review committee following standard procedures (double peer review). The final programme will be compiled by the conference organisers. Accepted abstracts will be published on the conference homepage.

Submissions should incorporate interdisciplinarity with a focus on contemporary history and a range of methodological approaches. We encourage applicants to include early career scholars as well as international colleagues when putting together their panels. Furthermore, panels should ensure gender equality. Women with equal qualifications will be given preference when inviting presenters.

Applicants will be informed of the decisions in early December 2017.

Travel Stipends

Applicants who cannot be reimbursed for their travel costs due to a lack of institutional affiliation are invited to apply for the "ZGT18" stipend. Based on available funds, this will cover participants' travel and accommodation costs. We request that all interested applicants write to the conference organisers by e-mail (zgt18@univie.ac.at) by 15 September 2017 explaining their reasons for applying and including a short CV.

The registration fee for the conference is 50 Euros.

This sum will also be used to finance the "ZGT18" stipends.

Coordinator

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Team

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