

# CONSTRUCTIVE UNREST

## Austrian Conference on Contemporary History 2016 | Graz

zeitgeschichtetag.uni-graz.at

Thursday, June 9 through Saturday, June 11, 2016  
Graz University, Austria

Deadline for the submission of proposals: Tuesday, December 15, 2015

### Call for Papers

Approaches to research in contemporary history are heterogeneous, variable, complex, and in progress. The *Austrian Conference on Contemporary History 2016 | Graz* aims at rendering visible this productive and constructive “unrest”. It will focus on pivotal theoretical and methodological debates as well as on current, innovative research questions, projects, and studies. Diverse standpoints in Contemporary History Studies will be examined, controversies and negotiations in terms of theories, methods, and empirical fields of research will be revisited. In doing so, the conference lays emphasis on critical, self-reflective scholarship and will be particularly attentive to the shaping and ongoing re-shaping of research traditions. The keynote lecture by Atina Grossmann (The Cooper Union, New York) will be embedded in this context.

The *Austrian Conference on Contemporary History 2016 | Graz* invites all researchers working on contemporary history to submit contributions for four conceptual streams: Reflections | Spaces | Agency | Palimpsests.

Applicants may indicate preferences for a specific stream. A programme committee (made up by members of all Contemporary History departments at Austrian universities) will try to arrange the programme accordingly. The Conference team welcomes individual papers as well as complete panels from historical or related disciplines on all topics in Contemporary History. Each panel must include at least one early-career-researcher. Additionally, inviting colleagues from academic institutions outside of Austria is recommended. When proposing a panel, it is possible to additionally name a chair.

Panel Option A: 3 papers + 1 commentator (15 minutes each), discussion (30 minutes)

Panel Option B: 4 papers (15 minutes each), discussion (30 minutes)

Furthermore, the conference organisers ask for submissions for an Open Space dedicated to artistic or activist interventions in Contemporary History as well as to cross-over-projects or other forms of examination of the recent past that exceeds the sometimes narrow boundaries of academia.

Historians without institutional affiliation and advanced students are invited to apply for one of 25 scholarships for participation in the *Austrian Conference in Contemporary History 2016 | Graz*. An informal application including a short description of the participant’s current occupational status should be attached to the proposal.

## Streams

### Reflections: Theories, Methods, Standpoints | Stream I

This stream calls for reflections on the positioning of contemporary histories and their socio-political as well as theoretical/methodological commitment. Aspects to be examined in detail include the development, potential and limits of contemporary historical approaches, the remodelling of academic environments, challenges and opportunities of cross-disciplinary exchange as well as conflicts concerning the socio-political interpretations and relevance of contemporary history in public discourse. This stream will provide opportunities to assess methodological and theoretical approaches which shape research either implicitly or explicitly.

### Spaces: Globality, Regionality, Networks | Stream II

This stream invites analyses which are concerned with aspects of spatialisation or de-spatialisation in contexts of globalisation/regionalisation, migration, the construction of boundaries and their transgression, liminality and communication. Beyond that, decentred, postcolonial, or interdependency-oriented approaches to any contemporary historical topic are welcome in this stream. Contributions are encouraged to focus on spaces, intersections and networks as well as on the hierarchies characterising them or their manifold interdependencies.

### Agency: Institutions, Power Relations, Positioning | Stream III

This stream provides a platform to engage with research on societal-cultural structures and the social practices of agents in specific fields of action. Questions of dynamics and transformation of power relations in institutional, structural, and biographical contexts are crucial for this segment of the conference. Studies presented in this stream may analyse individual and collective agency in the context of economies, politics and institutions. They might especially acknowledge hegemonies and discuss both affirmative and subversive/resisting reactions towards them.

### Palimpsests: Meaning, Mediality, Subversion | Stream IV

This stream invites contributions that take a cultural analytical/critical approach. These might address modes and media of narration, perception, and communication of historical processes as well as cultural representation and the generation of meaning and difference. Contributions to this stream may include, but are by no means limited to cultures of memory which have proven to constitute a focus area within Contemporary History Studies. Adding to this tradition, this stream explicitly encourages presenters to engage with analyses of public discourse, of visual, acoustic, and transmedia representations or the perception and communication of categories of difference and their cultural symbolisation.

## Open Space

The *Austrian Conference on Contemporary History 2016* | Graz introduces an Open Space for critical examination of contemporary history outside of conventional panels. The conference team calls for proposals of academic formats beside papers, such as discussions on specialised topics, exhibitions, short presentations of institutions, research groups, publications, or projects, science-to-public projects and the like. Furthermore, the open space especially welcomes work by artists, memory activists, or other individuals/collectives critically engaging with contemporary history, e.g. films and documentaries, performances, readings, installations, interventions, memory projects etc. The open space provides the opportunity for exhibition as well as for short presentation and discussion. All proposals are subject to the committee's arrangement of the conference programme.

Conference languages are German and English.

The conference team invites proposals for individual papers consisting of a title, an abstract of max. 1000 characters incl. spaces, and a short biographical note, all to be submitted on the conference homepage.

Proposals for panels should include the names of all contributors involved and their papers' titles, the individual paper descriptions, as well as an abstract summarising the panel's main objectives (each max. 1000 characters incl. spaces). All information on one panel should be uploaded together (including the individual abstracts) on the conference's website.

To apply for the Open Space, the conference organisers ask for a short project description (max. 1000 characters incl. spaces) as well as short biographical notes on the people involved, and the technicalities of the potential presentation. If needed, further material such as pictures or videos should be provided as web links only, or submitted in a separate e-mail to [zeitgeschichtetag@uni-graz.at](mailto:zeitgeschichtetag@uni-graz.at).

Proposals can be uploaded at [zeitgeschichtetag.uni-graz.at](http://zeitgeschichtetag.uni-graz.at) until Tuesday, December 15, 2015.

Conference Team:

University of Graz, Institute of History

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