

Call for Paper – Online Conference

2nd International Conference of the Section “Soziologiegeschichte” (History of Sociology) of
the German Sociological Association (DGS)

The Future of the History of Sociology and Social Sciences

Date: 2023 May, 17-19

Deadline: 2023 March, 7

Organisation:

Nicole Holzhauser (Technische Universität Braunschweig) &
Barbara Grüning (Università Milan-Bicocca)

With this conference, we aim to explore future research tasks and tools for the history of sociology. To this end, we will engage with disciplinary and non-disciplinary approaches, theories, methods, data, and practices that are central to contemporary developments in sociology and the social sciences. We want to stimulate a dialogue between colleagues from the history of sociology and other subfields of contemporary sociology as well as with colleagues from other relevant academic fields of knowledge inside and outside of the social sciences. Together, we would like to reflect on the opportunities and challenges of the present and the future of the social sciences from a perspective informed by the history of sociology.

The scientific landscape and the ways of academic working are changing so fundamentally that the theories and methods of the history of the social sciences will also inevitably (have to) change in the future. We will ask what research objects future sociologists writing histories of sociology will be confronted with and what research methods and theories the future field of the history of sociology will (have to) deal with. We will pay particular attention to the challenges that current developments in society and particularly in academia and in the social sciences pose to us. We will focus on major societal transformation processes such as globalization and social change as well as digitalization and technological change, which are subject to the social sciences, but also affect and change the academic field, not least by ushering new approaches and methods with new data and instruments of collection and analysis.

Large quantitative data sets, as they are processed in today's social inequality and mobility research and in fast-growing, highly specialized areas such as computational social sciences or social science genetics, pose theoretical and methodological challenges not only for current social scientists but also for the future history of sociology. The same applies to qualitative and visual data, such as those explored and produced in ethnographic studies or network analyses for instance of digital and/or transnational spaces. Not to forget, the changes in the scientific system itself, for instance through digitization, such as the transformation of publishing practices and the publishing system, or changes in scientific communication, knowledge production, distribution and reception practices (see also the current discussions about the future role of artificial intelligence). Not only the technological processes are changing, the social reality of the academic system is also undergoing disruptive changes. Academic positions and their hierarchies in the institutional system, modes of recognition and remuneration, social inequalities (such as class, race, and gender) and the conditions of scientific work and labour are renegotiated or are subject to processes of change in a globalizing and globalized world in transition. All of this is taking place in a field of tension between the progressive economization of the academic sphere and power-critical democratization (attempts) as counter-strategies. And this also has implications for the social, symbolic and epistemic structures of the social sciences with potential shifts in disciplinary

boundaries, theory developments, and changing bodies of knowledge. In addition, we need to look at other forms of social change as contexts, considering also emerging, sometimes disruptive, issues of critical importance in our regional and at the same time globalized societies (e.g., conflicts and wars and their consequences, such as the Russian-Ukrainian one and the accompanying resurgent Cold War) and consider how they affect scholarship and whether and how the history of sociology can contribute to a better understanding of such transformational processes.

We would like to discuss these new realities and consider how to develop theories, methods, and tools that can be used to successfully conduct research in the future. Departing from these premises, we invite disciplinary and interdisciplinary contributions, that deal with

- theoretical, methodological and/or empirical questions, potentials and challenges for the future of the history of sociology and the sociological-historical study of the social sciences; we especially welcome contributions that discuss innovative methods from other subfields/disciplines that hold promise for the history of sociology;
- phenomena of digitalization and technological change as well as their implications for sociology and social sciences, we especially welcome contributions that deal with novel opportunities and problems;
- phenomena of globalization and social change and their implications for sociology and the social sciences; contributions that address opportunities and challenges of and from the Global South as well as inequalities such as race, gender and/or class are particularly welcome;
- other relevant phenomena of disruption or change that have implications for sociology and the social sciences today and in the future, and what this means for the history of sociology in the future;
- a combination of the above-mentioned foci.
- We cordially invite contributors to adopt a diversity-sensitive perspective and to consider inequalities as potential dimensions of power and governance in academia.

We look forward to receiving your proposals of approximately 300 words by March 7, 2023, and plan to provide feedback by March 15.

Please send your abstract with the relevant contact details to soziologiegeschichte@gmail.com.