

Call for papers to the plenary sessions at the 39th DGS Congress 2018 in Göttingen

The eight plenary sessions will be held on Tuesday the 25th of September 2018 and Thursday the 27th of September 2018 between 9 am and midday. Please send your exposé for a plenary paper (maximum of 5,000 characters including blanks) by the 31st of March 2018 to the jury members named for each plenary session. Although each individual is allowed to present two papers at the Congress, only one may be a plenary paper. In total, four or a maximum of five papers are permitted for each plenary session.

Plenary session 1: Global and post-colonial perspectives in historical sociology

The goal of this plenary session is to cast light on the interplay between global dynamics and local transformations from the perspective of historical sociology. In a dialogue with global history, post-colonial studies, and international relations, historical sociology has undergone a global shift in recent years. By studying imperial dependencies, international social movements, transnational fields, and the worldwide diffusion of ideologies, norms, and cognitive repertoires, this *global historical sociology* goes beyond older historical sociology with its narrow focus on national states and class relations. At the same time, its historical depth and its attention to transregional entanglements also cast a new light on sociological theories about globalization, transnationalization, and a world society.

Papers presented at this session should use original research to cast light on current trends in a globally focused and historically oriented sociology. Moreover, they should discuss the theoretical and methodological contributions they make to the analysis of complex dynamics within the global modern world. For example, they can consider how to conceive 'time' and 'space' as dimensions with which to handle each specific research context appropriately. Furthermore, they can address epistemological problems arising from the way sociological knowledge is locally positioned and offer suggestions regarding how these positionings could be resolved.

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Plenary session 2: Re-nationalization? The economy, politics, and society in contemporary capitalism

For several decades now, economy and society have been dominated by neo-liberal concepts, together with a far-reaching consensus – not just in North America and Europe – that international free trade tends to promote positive economic development in the nation states. However, this belief now seems to be losing ground politically. After World War 2, the nation state was not only the self-evident space of activity for economic organizations but also the dominant scope of economic and socio-political activity. With globalization and financialization, however, the nation state has been declared dead multiple times. Nonetheless, today it seems to be returning with great political force – as shown not only by Brexit and European right-wing populism but

also by protectionist trends in supra- und international foreign and trade policy. This makes it necessary to analyse how the increasingly complex relation or – as ascertained repeatedly in sociology – the incongruence between political and economic spaces has evolved. This process cannot be perceived as being solely political or solely economic. Instead, it is necessary to ask how forms of company and work organization, as well as dominant patterns of interpretation in economy, society, and politics are linked together locally, regionally, nationally, and transnationally. Hence, the dynamics of globalization and re-nationalization of economic and political activity need to be jointly examined from various perspectives.

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Plenary session 3: Labour between neo-liberalism and authoritarianism

Labour' has always been a contested area of social practices and discourses. Right from the beginning, the history of modern capitalism has also been a history of the 'politics of labour'. Through the establishment and expansion of the welfare state, labour became, on the one hand, a central object of political regulation. However, on the other hand – for instance, in Germany – it was increasingly separated from the logics of social struggle. Instead, labour has been stylized as (human) capital in the 'neo-liberal' era. The optimization of labour power was declared an individual responsibility, and a central target of state policies in the context of international competitiveness. Today, however, labour has once more turned into a field of political contestation. This is due to the shift towards an 'activating' welfare state and to renewed debates over the social significance and the economic value of re-productive 'care labour'. Moreover, industrial labour, which had long been considered a relic of the past, has regained public and political attention. It has proved to be a guarantee for Germany's economic stability during the global economic crisis, it functions as a hot-spot of new technologies (Industry 4.0), and it seems to provide a (potential) source of voters for right-wing parties. The politics of labour have thus returned to the fore of attention – in new forms, and new social contexts. This plenary session will address the interplay between global, national, and local dynamics in the re-politicization of labour while focusing particularly on how far liberal market policy approaches tend to be supplemented, overlaid, or replaced by authoritarian elements and motives.

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Plenary session 4: Social inequalities – from local to global

Recent decades have seen a heightening of social inequalities in many regions of the world. In Germany, for example – as in many other Western countries – income disparities have increased. Work careers have become more uncertain – particularly for those with low educational qualifications. However, even the middle classes seem to be facing increasing pressure, while wealth and power are simultaneously becoming concentrated in narrow upper classes. Responsibility for these developments is attributed to, among others, global economic competition and the resulting constraints on occupational and welfare state levels. The plenary session should

take a closer look at the factors influencing social inequality and cast light on interactions on regional, national, and global levels. One possible question, for example, addresses which effects global developments (such as the financial crisis) have on national or regional social inequalities, and how do institutional regulations in interaction with individual resources contribute to this. A particularly interesting aspect is the complex entanglements and contradictions between local and global dynamics and perspectives such as the decrease in international inequalities and the accompanying increase in intranational inequalities or the transnational chains of wage standards and migration. Papers are invited that present studies on macro, meso, and micro levels as well as time-based analyses (in terms of historical time and life courses). Besides papers addressing socio-economic inequalities (in, for example, income, education, and occupation), papers are also invited that examine other dimensions such as political participation or health. Papers are particularly welcome that focus on different world regions and transnational inequalities.

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Plenary session 5: Migration, flight, and transnational integration

In our times, migration – be it, for example, labour migration on different qualification levels or the flight from war and repression – along with its consequences for the individual and society have become a dominant societal topic. This plenary session should discuss migration processes, their causes, their consequences, and the dynamics of their development from different perspectives. These can be more or less ‘large scale’ or small-scale perspectives and, when appropriate, they should also be brought into relation with each other. Examples are global and transnational perspectives on movements in migration and flight; a focus on individual and collective actors in their constellations of social conditions; a consideration of how migration processes influence national integration and its public discussion; and, finally, a focus on the interactions between transnational and local processes, connections, and social structures (e.g. *global care chains*, *brain drain*, and *brain gain*).

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Plenary session 6: Religious movements and dynamics of globalization

This plenary session aims to discuss the relation between modern religious movements and the dynamics of globalization. From early on, the missionary movements of the Catholic and Protestant churches were closely entangled with the colonialization projects of European states. Subsequently, the liberal reform movements in Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism at the turn of the 19th to the 20th centuries were marked by a global diffusion of progressive ideologies. The fundamentalist, charismatic, and religiously nationalistic movements of the

present-day also unmistakably transcend national borders through their network-like social forms and the use of new digital communication media. In local contexts throughout the world, these modern religious movements have initiated many processes of change from the pluralization of religious fields, across the hybridization of religious identities and practices, to the often conflictual renegotiation of institutional arrangements of religion, law, politics, and gender.

Contributions to this plenary session should discuss the complex interplay of global and local dynamics in religious change on the basis of (empirical) research findings while paying particular attention to the significance of modern religious movements for general sociological theories including that of globalization.

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Plenary session 7: Digital lives

How do processes of digitization influence the conditions under which people work and live in different world regions and transnational social spaces? There are a number of ways in which this question can be examined empirically. Whether applied to work processes and organizational structures, to dynamics of production and consumption, to communication over social networks, to forms of *communitization* and consociation, to hierarchies of interaction, to instruments of social research, or to modes of surveillance or protest, processes of digitization impact on everyday life, on various life domains, and on the understanding of social life in general. Given the potential of processes of digitization to change social and cultural dynamics, they may well contribute to the erosion of existing borders and to the establishment of new ones. In this plenary session, we want to draw upon both theoretical and empirical contributions to discuss these issues. The focus will be directed towards not only spatial and temporal dimensions but also new realities and virtualities.

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Plenary session 8: Climate change – global and local challenges and responses

‘Climate change’ is a topic in which interpretations, evaluations, and actions involving individual and collective actors from different societal arenas (e.g. politics, law, business, science, or the media) are both relevant and interact with each other. The questions in this plenary session focus on how the ‘collective good’ problem of climate change is discussed in different cultural contexts, over the course of time, or in specific situations (e.g. by political actors on a national or international level); and how this might lead to differences in individual or milieu-specific patterns of action and policy proposals and differences in the ways in which they are potentially implemented. In order to understand the complex dynamics of global and local developments, contributions

might also study the role of spatial borders, cultural contexts, and institutional frames for the interpretation of the causes and effects of climate change; and moreover, how temporal dimensions of opportunities and risks are negotiated and taken into account as priorities in either the present or the future.

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