



Call for Papers

Changing Historiographical Perspectives on Rural Societies

University of Zürich, 10/11 February 2017

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Since the middle of the last decade of the 20th century historiography has focused increasingly on rural societies. We find new journals, archives and research institutions dedicated to the documentation and study of rural history being established all over Europe. An important facet of this movement is that rural historians began to organise themselves so as to facilitate the creation and exchange of newly created knowledge. With the foundation of the European Rural History Organisation (EURHO) in 2010, and its bi-annual rural history conference, the transnationally linked community has established its own notable institutions.

The advances achieved to date find expression in the variety of new sources, which have been made accessible, the new methods and conceptual perspectives which have been applied in the writing of rural history and the growing number of publications. Such advances have transformed the once unfashionable topic of rural history into an attractive and vibrant object of investigation for young scholars.

In light of what has been achieved by all these developments, the question can now be asked: What exactly do historians have in mind when they speak of 'rural history', 'rural society' and 'rurality'? Probably the most accurate answer to this question would point to a whole range of detectable differences in what is now understood by 'rural history' and conceptions of 'rural society' and 'rurality'. Of course, significant differences in conceptualising the rural are not new and the seeming novelty of contemporary competing perspectives needs to be made the subject of continuing scrutiny.

This conference, and its associated publication project, will endeavour to unearth, make visible and discuss changing perspectives in rural history. By analysing historians attempts to understand and account for rural realities we intend to contribute towards a better and improved historiography of the rural world.

The conference will be held on the 10/11 February 2017 at the University of Zürich. Proposals of 200-300 words can be sent until 30 September 2016 to the organisers. A selection of the presentations will be published in a thematic number of a journal.

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