

Opening of the Academic Year Research School Political History

Utrecht, 1 October 2019 16.00 – 18.00 hrs.

We warmly invite you for the opening meeting of the national Research School Political History (OPG). In this meeting, we will present the new training program, new PhD candidates will introduce themselves and PhD candidates in their second year receive their basic training certificate. The theme of our round table is democracy vs autocracy.

Roundtable on democracy and autocracy

With Annelien de Dijn, Joris Gijsenbergh, Lars Rensman and Dirk Jan Wolffram

The theme of our rountable is inspired by current societal and political developments, especially the rise of populism and the emergence of elected autocratic leaders in many countries over the world. History shows that democracy and autocracy are all but mutually exclusive. In the 5th century BC the implementation of Athenian democracy required autocratic leadership. Robespierre legitimized his reign of terror with an appeal to the will of the people, as did many dictators after him. Democracy was instrumental in fascist and Nazi seizure of power, and the past decades saw the rise of illiberal democracy. And even in the mother of all parliaments, Brexit and Boris Johnson have laid bare the vulnerability of democracy.

What can be the lessons learned if we reconsider the historical relation between democracy and autocracy? Lessons for studying political history and for analyzing present-day politics.

Speakers are Annelien de Dijn (Utrecht University), professor of Modern Political History and chair of the Political History section. Her research focuses on the history of political thought in Europe and in the United States from 1700 to the present. Dr. Joris Gijsenbergh (Radboud University Nijmegen) is assistant professor political history, specialized in the history of democracy in Western-Europe and the United States during the twentieth century. Lars Rensmann (Groningen University) is professor of European Politics and Society and Director of the Research Center for the Study of Democratic Cultures and Politics. The debate will be chaired by OPG director of education prof. dr. Dirk Jan Wolffram (Groningen University), professor in the History of Governance and Politics in Modern Times.

Program

- 16.00 hrs. Opening and presentation training program RSPH
- 16.15 hrs. Roundtable democracy and autocracy
- 17.15 hrs. Certificate award ceremony and drinks



Date: 1 October 2019, 16.00 – 18.00 hrs.

Location: Utrecht, Sweelinkzaal, Drift 21 Utrecht, 1 October 2019, 16.00 – 17.30 hrs.

Registration: please send an email before 27 September to

bureau@onderzoekschoolpolitiegegeschiedenis.nl. Participation is free of charge.

Information: margit.van.der.steen@huygens.knaw.nl