



Invitation to a webinar

“The permanent crisis of democracy”

23 April, 4.30PM-7PM (CEST) / 10.30AM-1PM (EDT), online

An online webinar with Jens Hacke (Universität der Bundeswehr München), Martin Conway (Oxford University) and Nadia Urbinati (Columbia University) and junior researchers.

The Association for Political History, in collaboration with the European Institute and the Queen Wilhelmina Chair for Dutch Studies (Columbia University, NYC), the Netherlands Research School for Political History and the Department of History of Utrecht University, organize a webinar on the permanent crisis of democracy.

Considering the large number of books and articles with ‘Crisis’ and ‘Democracy’ in its title, published since the end of the nineteenth century until the present day, it is clear that after democracy became unavoidable, it nevertheless remained contested. In this seminar we aim to reflect on this apparent permanence of the crisis of democracy. How to explain the constant consternation? Were there moments democracy was not in crisis? Is it always and everywhere the same crisis? Are there patterns or regularities in its (re)emergence? What are characteristics of the current crisis (crises?) of democracy?

The seminar consists of two parts. In the first section, these general questions are discussed with a panel of three prominent scholars in the history and theory of democracy. In the second part, junior researchers will present their research related to the central topic of the crisis of democracy. In each section, there is room for other participants to join the discussion.

Program

4.30 Introduction: the permanent crisis of democracy

Introduced and chaired by Ido de Haan, professor of Political History at Utrecht University, academic director of the RSPH and 2019 Visiting Professor on the Queen Wilhelmina Chair for Dutch Studies at the European Institute (Columbia University, NYC).

4.40 The permanent crisis of democracy, from the interwar crisis to contemporary post-democracy

The main questions of this seminar will be discussed in three short presentations, followed by a general discussion. The panel consists of

- Jens Hacke, professor of Comparative Studies of Political Culture of the Universität der Bundeswehr München. Among his publications are *Existenzkrise der Demokratie. Zur politischen Theorie des Liberalismus in der Zwischenkriegszeit* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2018) and 'Liberal Alternatives during the Crisis of Democracy. The Political Economist Moritz Julius Bonn as a Political Thinker in the Era of the Two World Wars', in: *New German Critique* 42 (2015), Heft 3, pp. 145-168.
- Martin Conway, professor of Contemporary European History at the University of Oxford and Fellow and Tutor in History at Balliol College. He recently published *Western Europe's Democratic Age 1945-1968* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020). Among his many publications is also the recent article 'On fragile democracy: Contemporary and historical', which is an introduction to the special issue on Fragile Democracy he edited together with Johanna Rainio-Niemi for the *Journal of Modern European History* 17 (2019) 4, 422-538.
- Nadia Urbinati, Kyriakos Tsakopoulos Professor of Political Theory at Columbia University in the City of New York. Among her many books are *Me The People: How Populism Transforms Democracy* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2019) and *Democracy Disfigured: Opinion, Truth and the People* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2014). She also wrote 'Reflections on the Meaning of "Crisis of Democracy"', *Democratic Theory* 3 (2016) 1, 6-31.

5.45 Break

6.00 Case studies in the history of the crisis of democracy

In this second part, junior scholars will present their research, related to the crisis of democracy. After their short statements, the members of the panel will comment, followed by a discussion with the other participants in the seminar. Presenters are:

- Elisabeth Dieterman, PhD at Leiden University, working on the project Political Legitimacy under Debate: Democracy and Authority in the Netherlands in the 1880s, 1930s and 1960s. Previously, she published 'Demokratische Perspektiven in den Niederlanden der 1930er Jahre', in: Tim. B. Müller and Adam Tooze (Eds.), *Normalität und Fragilität. Demokratie nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2015), 421-435.
- Karen Lauwers, postdoctoral researcher at the University of Helsinki, working on the project Vocal Articulations of Parliamentary Identity and Empire. In 2019, she defended her dissertation at Antwerp University, titled *Negotiating the Republic. Direct interactions between unorganized citizens and MPs in France, ca. 1900-1930*.
- Joris Gijzenbergh, postdoctoral researcher at the Departments of Constitutional Law and Philosophy of Law of the Radboud University, working on Political parties between freedom and restriction. Previously, he co-edited the volume *Creative Crises of Democracy* (Brussel : Peter Lang, 2012). Among his publications is also 'Contrasting Complaints about Parliamentarism in Western-Europe (1918-1939)', in: Kari Palonen & José María Rosales (Eds.), *Parliamentarism and Democratic Theory. Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Leverkusen: Barbara Budrich, 2015), 117-139.
- Ermes Antonucci, Ph.D. Candidate in "Politics: History, Theory, Science" at Luiss University (Rome). His research interests focus on the history of the Italian judiciary and on the analysis of judicial policies and institutions. At the moment, he is conducting his Ph.D. research on the history of the Italian judiciary in the republican period.

7PM End of the seminar

Registration, participation and credits

Registration via <https://forms.gle/Dc9cLYfLUh5rCgFYA>. After registration you will receive a link to the webinar.

The webinar is open to all researchers connected to the APH, RSPH, Dutch universities and the European Institute at Columbia. Other interested researchers can participate upon request.

Research Master students, Graduate students, and PhD candidates who want to earn 1 ECTS for participating in the webinar have to submit a reflection of 1000 words on the debate within 14 days after the meeting, to be sent to Ido de Haan (Utrecht University).

For information about the webinar, requests to participate, and information about receiving credits for participation in the webinar, contact Ido de Haan (i.dehaan@uu.nl)