

Call for Papers

Contested Institutions in Modern Germany History: Genealogical, Conceptual, International and Comparative Perspectives

Utrecht University, 12 January 2024

In the early 21st century, in Germany as elsewhere, trust in institutions has declined. Governments, parliaments, political parties, bureaucracies, universities, research institutes and other state and non-state institutions all had to face a fragmentation of their erstwhile status. Why did this happen? And how structural or systematic is this decline of trust? The ascent of internet, populism, post-truth and a wider presumed crisis of democracy have often been attributed to this. However, such presentist statements do require some investigations into the novelty of these developments, as well as the application of a historical perspective on it. After all: modern German history has been marked by nothing but sharp caesuras in the establishment, development, dissolution, reinstatement, of state and non-state institutions. Germany history, then, offers a unique case study to explore the question of why, how, and when institutions are contested and what the consequences are for the development of liberal democracy.

The second annual conference of the *Platform Duitse Geschiedenis* will explore this question, but not based on the assumption that the course of German history was necessarily unique in this sense; rather, the conference encourage international and comparative papers. The conference is open to all scholars from all disciplines willing to contribute to historicization of these current affairs: be it with conceptual, genealogical, institutional, international, comparative, or deconstructivist approaches. Contributions need to be original research papers. The conference languages are German and English. The organizers envisage to publish the proceedings in a peer-reviewed edited volume, to be published with an international academic publisher.

The conference's keynote address will be delivered by Professor Ute Frevert (Max Planck Institute for Human Development).

Please send a 250-word abstract and a 100-word biography as one document by 15 October 2023 to Beatrice de Graaf (b.a.degraaf@uu.nl) or Frank Sterkenburgh (f.f.sterkenburgh@uu.nl). Notifications of acceptance will be sent out in late October.