

[CFP: The Gender of Sovereignty in European Politics and Aesthetics \(Reminder\)](#)

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Call for Papers

Date:

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Location:

Belgium

Subject Fields:

Cultural History / Studies, Humanities, Literature, Political History / Studies, Women's & Gender History / Studies

The Gender of Sovereignty in European Politics and Aesthetics

International Conference

University of Leuven | 18-20 December 2017

To what extent would our perception of the history of sovereignty change if we systematically looked at it from a gender perspective? Sovereignty as political power or authority of governance has been a major theme in European thought from the beginning of the intellectual reflection on community. Indeed, a multiplicity of discourses and cultural practices ranging from philosophy and political theory to historiography, theology, arts and literature have, often in entangled ways, sought to legitimize, represent, explore, recalibrate or reject conceived notions of rule. While there can be no misunderstanding as to the reality of sovereignty, its conceptualization has always been a matter of imagination, as Hobbes already revealed when he conceded a reciprocity of 'laws of nature' and 'persons artificial' in his design of the appropriate rule. Yet whereas the imagination of sovereignty is not a straightforward narrative, its entire history reveals a remarkably obsessive embarrassment with gender that still persists today. No matter what political covenant became dominant, the idea of female sovereignty or women's consistent participation in matters of authority was deemed abnormal, exceptional, unnatural, hence necessarily transitory and in need of a rhetoric of apology and endorsement. Not only state rule, but *mutatis mutandis* all forms of civic communal configurations, such as the field of cultural production, religious life or scholarship, seem to echo the same mantra of (un)gendered authority. And to what extent do biopolitical theories of rule and power include a gender perspective? Was political sovereignty by women not always already subject to some form of 'biopolitical' discourse? Does, in other words, history from the perspective of female rule yield a similar narrative from antiquity to modernity as set out by Foucault et al.? This international, interdisciplinary conference seeks to revisit the history of sovereignty in European thought and culture by consistently assuming a gender perspective from the beginnings of modernity until today.

The conference on the gender of sovereignty in European politics and aesthetics wants to bring together investigations that revisit issues of gender and sovereignty from a variety of disciplines. The historical scope of the conference ranges from the beginnings of modernity to the present. We invite

papers that address imaginations of sovereignty in political and cultural discourse either through case-studies or in comprehensive analyses envisioning a modified history.

Keynote speakers will be: Marnix Beyen (University of Antwerp), Joanna Marschner (Historical Royal Palaces London), Elisabeth Krimmer (UC Davis), Maria Cristina Quintero (Ibryn Mawr) & Judith Vega (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen).

Topics of interests include but are not restricted to:

- Women's sovereignty in politics, the arts and different media and performances: cases, modifications and ambivalences
- Metonymies of sovereignty (in civic life and cultural networks)
- Fantasies of female rule in intellectual or poetical discourse
- Gender, authority and literary and artistic genres
- Beyond the public eye: experiences and reflections of power in correspondence, diaries and memoirs
- History and historiography: from historicism to biopolitics
- Pathological scripts of female rule
- Bodies of female rule

The deadline for abstracts (300 words) is **1st of August 2017** (see thegenderofsovereignty.be for further information and submission link)

Contact Info:

Prof. Dr. Anke Gilleir (anke.gilleir@kuleuven.be)

Co-organizer: Aude Defurne (aude.defurne@kuleuven.be)

Contact Email:

anke.gilleir@kuleuven.be

URL:

<http://thegenderofsovereignty.be>