



Future Directions in the Humanities

The GS@IASH organizes events on innovative topics in the humanities. The particular aims of these encounters is to promote the dialogue between various disciplines (especially between the "two cultures"), and between academia and the public sphere. For this purpose, the Institute invites scholars who venture outside their own fields into the territory of the natural sciences and medicine, law, economics, politics, or outside of academia.

For further informations please visit our website: www.iash.unibe.ch

Friday, March 13, 2015, 17:30
Hauptgebäude der Universität Bern, Hochschulstrasse 4
Hörsaal 120

Contemporary Elections and Electoral Corruption

Round table discussion

with:

Prof. Dr. Mark Pieth (Basel) | Anca Simina (Bucharest)

Dr. Richard Lappin (Warsaw) | Dr. Ronald Kroeze (Amsterdam)

Despite different characteristics and features, elections are often considered to be the basis of modern democracies and a fundamental element of good governance. Within the last 200 hundred years, ballots have been established as the usual formal procedure not only to fill public offices but also to staff administrative offices of private or business organisations. While national electoral laws define the rules of procedure, state supervision as well as independent non-governmental organisations monitor the lawful course of votes. Since – at least in Western democracies – explicit electoral frauds are rather isolated cases, the electoral system is widely trusted.

The basic principles of electoral systems in Europe are only rarely a matter of public discussion. However, sensitive issues such as the financing of political parties and of political campaigns and votes raise questions regarding the transparency and fairness of votes. Do these hardly traceable financial cash flows compromise democracy? Can they even be considered as 'implicit corruption'? The same applies to non-governmental organisations, whose actions and decisions are politically and socially highly influential, but little transparent. In any case, given their crucial importance, elections and the possibility of their manipulation need to be subject of public awareness

In order to raise – and maybe answer – those and other questions, we brought together four experts in the field of political corruption: Mark Pieth (Basel), professor of criminal law, who is an internationally renowned expert on corruption and related matters; Anca Simina (Bucharest) who works as an investigative journalist for the Romanian newspaper Gândul; Richard Lappin (Warsaw), a Senior Election Adviser with the OSCE; and Ronald Koeze (Amsterdam) who does historical research in the field of corruption and will moderate the debate.

The discussion will be public. The round table is part of the international conference "Elections and Electoral Corruption in the Early Modern Period, (1500-1700)", which takes place in Bern, 13.-14.03.2015 and is organised by the SNF funded chair "Politische Korruption in Bern und Venedig, 1400-1700".

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