



Exposing Myths: A Dangerous Strategy for Historians

Prof. em. Dr. Antoon De Baets, University of Groningen & Network of Concerned Historians

Organized by the Käte Hamburger Kolleg/Centre for Global Cooperation Research, University of Duisburg-Essen

Tuesday, 13th September 2022, 16:00-17:30 **(CEST)**

In-Person and Online Lecture

Foundational historical myths are stories which refer to the origins of a political unit (usually the state), its territory and its great figures (heroes and martyrs) and their mission. In general, such myths serve two purposes: the legitimation of the power of those at the helm of the state and the construction of a collective identity for their subjects.

The problem is that these myths contain uncorroborated historical facts (including lies and fantasies) and unsubstantiated historical opinions. Historians and others interested in the past were sometimes instrumental in creating or, when they already existed, buttressing these myths. Frequently, however, they criticized and, in some cases, even publicly attacked the unreliable elements of these myths. If they chose the latter path, they did so at great personal risk because undermining these myths equalled the de-legitimation of power and the deconstruction of collective identity.

In his Käte Hamburger Lecture, Antoon De Baets takes a triple approach to this problem. First, he will look at some cases of foundational myths. Then, he will analyze how historians have exposed them. Finally, he will look at the consequences they suffered and conclude the lecture with some general reflections.

Programme

16:00-16:10 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Nina Schneider

Research Group Leader, Käte Hamburger Kolleg/ Centre for Global Cooperation Research, University of Duisburg-Essen

16:10-17:00 48TH KÄTE HAMBURGER LECTURE

EXPOSING MYTHS: A DANGEROUS STRATEGY FOR HISTORIANS

Professor emeritus Dr. Antoon De Baets

University of Groningen & Network of Concerned Historians

Discussant: N.N.

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Moderator: Nina Schneider

17:00-17:30 Q&A WITH THE AUDIENCE

17:30 CONCLUDING REMARKS AND END OF THE LECTURE