

Announcement

Webinar: History at the Intersection of Sports and Politics

Series: Making Political History Global

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**Power in History, the Research Group Political History of the University of Antwerp
in cooperation with Association for Political History**

Arguably even more than other subdisciplines of history, political history has been forged in Europe and has therefore taken Western political modernity as its starting point. New paradigms like postcolonialism and subaltern studies have not been able fundamentally to alter this situation. Scholars of non-Western history experience nearly insurmountable thresholds to engage in fruitful discussions with traditional political historians – thresholds situated at the level of concepts, languages, sources and methods. In this webinar, some empirical examples will serve as a starting point for a discussion on these obstacles – and on the ways to get rid of them.

This webinar in the series of ‘Making Political History Global’ focuses on sports history.

As important spectacles of mass entertainment, nations have long used sports for political ends. As such, the history of sports can serve as a vehicle for the study of nationalism and national identity. Yet, political sports history also allows the historian to move beyond more top-down-approaches as it lends itself to addressing questions pertaining to the politics of race, ethnicity, and gender in terms of discrimination, resistance, and emancipation. As exemplified by Tommie Smith and John Carlos’s black power salute during the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico City, individual athletes have used the international stage at important sporting events in order to contest hegemonic power. Violence has also been employed by individuals and groups in order to set forth their political agendas at international sporting events, as exemplified by the massacre at the 1972 Olympics in Munich.

This webinar consists of two sessions: The first session will consider different ways of conducting historical research into sports history, both from more ‘top down’ as well a more ‘bottom up’ approaches. Consequently, this session will consider the place of sports history within the broader history discipline and the domain of political history more specifically. Attention will be paid to the types of sources and methodologies that are of interest to the political sports historian as well as the methodological difficulties that one may encounter. Sport being a global phenomenon, the second session will also ask the question to which degree and in which ways sports history may help to make political history more global.

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