

**PROGRAMME OF
TEYLERS GODGELEERD GENOOTSCHAP
AT HAARLEM
FOR THE YEAR 2012**

THE DIRECTORS OF TEYLERS STICHTING (TEYLER'S FOUNDATION)
AND THE MEMBERS OF TEYLERS GODGELEERD GENOOTSCHAP
(TEYLER'S THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)

announce an essay competition to
be answered before **May 1, 2015**.

SUBJECT

Religious liberalism and internationalisation in the 19th and early 20th centuries, with special attention to the Netherlands

Further information

In the early 21st century liberal religion is again an item on the religious and political agenda as it is viewed as a healthy antidote to religious fundamentalism and an attractive option for those believers who do neither want to side with fundamentalism nor with agnosticism or atheism. Religious liberals show themselves to be open-minded towards modern culture and society. It is their fear that religion will become an antiquity, a residue of 'medievalism', if it will not be adapted to modernity.

Rooted in the Enlightenment, religious liberalism started to flourish in the 19th century when liberal currents manifested themselves in world religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. Liberal believers all over the world started to establish international and inter-religious networks. Dutch religious liberals were very much involved in these networks, particularly Protestants since religious liberalism (or modernism) among Roman Catholics was restricted to only a handful of believers in our country. There was an intensive intellectual and religious exchange between the Netherlands and the international liberal world judging by the numerous personal contacts due to the attendance of Dutch liberals at international conferences, their membership of committees and editorial boards of scholarly journals, and various correspondences.

What is required here is an analysis of the international and inter-religious orientation of religious liberalism in the 19th and early 20th centuries in order to gain insight into the role of the Netherlands in the global liberal world.

In order to limit the scope of the competition topic, participants are advised to focus on the relationship between the Netherlands and one of the international partners, such as Germany, Switzerland, France, England or America. The study may concentrate on one or two expressions of internationalization including lecture series, (scholarly) periodicals, conferences, translations and correspondences. This approach will not only show what the internationalisation of liberalism entailed but will also shed light on general questions concerning the notion of identity in relation to religious affiliations and

geographical boundaries. In what way and to what extent can the liberal identity said to be determined by denominational and national contexts?

A comment on terminology: as above a wide spectrum of terms is usually employed by historians to denote the movement headed under 'religious liberalism' including such terms as modernism, liberalism, modern theology, progressive religion etcetera, each of which expresses a particular shade of meaning. Participants are free to choose their own accents within the broader domain of religious liberalism.

Still pending is the following essay competition to be answered before May 1, 2014:

The formation of and/or changes in the image of Islam in the Netherlands in the years 1990 – 2010.

Further information

On 14 July 2007, Ella Vogelaar, who was the Minister of Urban Policy and Integration of Ethnic Minorities between 22 February 2007 and 13 November 2008, was quoted in the daily newspaper *Trouw* as saying: "Centuries ago, the Jewish community came to the Netherlands and now we say: The Netherlands is a country that was formed by Judeo-Christian traditions. I can imagine that we will have a similar process with Islam." This sparked a storm of criticism and one fellow politician called her 'bonkers'.

Could the severity of this reaction to the Minister's statement be explained by a new or changed image of Islam that has developed since the beginning of the 1990s? If so, what does this image look like? The answers to these questions must be set out in a study that is not meant to support or refute former Minister Vogelaar's statement, nor must submissions be aimed at defending or attacking a certain political inclination. The study is expected to focus on the relation or relations between the above-mentioned reactions and the image of Islam in the Netherlands that evolved in these two decades in the wake of national and international developments.

Various processes seem to have affected the formation of a new or changed image of Islam in the Netherlands between 1990 and 2010. First of all, the arrival of immigrants from so-called 'Muslim countries' since 1964 has demographically led to the rise of a substantial Muslim minority. Since the beginning of the 1990s, some sections of the Dutch population have experienced the presence of this religious minority as a problem. A second process is linked to the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989. After this event, according to a number of prominent Western opinion leaders and politicians, Islam and Islamic fundamentalism have taken the place of communism as an enemy of and danger to the West. This trend was also perceived in the Netherlands. For example, in 1997, Pim Fortuyn warned against the islamisation of Dutch culture, while others feared a 'shari'asation' of Dutch society. Thirdly, terrorist attacks like 9/11 (2001) and the murder of Theo van Gogh on 2 November 2004 by perpetrators who claimed to have acted in the name of Islam have affected (the development of) the image of Islam in the Netherlands. Finally, from the beginning of the 1990s, the rekindled discussion on the Dutch identity and the norms and values that go with that identity could also have played a role in forming a new or changed Dutch image of Islam. Frits Bolkestein, in a lecture presented in Lucerne on 6 September 1991, was one of the first Dutchmen who raised the question of whether an Islamic identity is compatible with the Dutch identity.

To gain insight into the aspects that were new or different to the Dutch image of Islam that was formed in the years 1990-2010, the study can also pay attention to the image of Islam that existed among the Dutch before the 1990s. Likewise, the image of Islam in other Western European countries may be explored as part of the study. Various studies have already been published in these fields. A comparative perspective would not only offer insight into the development of the Dutch image of Islam

over time but could also identify what was new or different to this image in the decades spanning the turn of the century. Perhaps an answer may thus be formulated to the question of why the reactions to the statement of former Minister Vogelaar were so severe.

Entries should consist of either one extended study, in the form of a text prepared for publication, or of several publications, most of which should have appeared in the three years prior to May 1, 2015. In the latter case entrants should also submit a hitherto unpublished text, written especially for the competition, in which the earlier publications are placed in a broader academic context.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pieter Teyler van der Hulst (Haarlem, 1702-1778) was a Dutch merchant. In his will he stipulated the founding of an important museum together with *Teylers Stichting (Teyler's Foundation)*. Part of this Foundation are two learned societies, each of which presents a yearly essay competition. *Teylers Godgeleerd Genootschap (Teyler's Theological Society)* is one of these learned societies. It organizes essay competitions in the field of theology, philosophy of religion and religious studies.

PROCEDURE

In order to qualify for the competition, candidates should submit four copies of their entry to the Directors of *Teylers Stichting*, Spaarne 16, 2011 CH Haarlem, Netherlands, before May 1, 2015, and May 1, 2014 respectively. Entries received after that date will not be taken into consideration. The essays must be in English, French, German or Dutch. Because of the stipulations of Pieter Teyler's will, the essays may not mention the author's name but should be identified only by a motto. The entry should be accompanied by a sealed envelope containing the author's name and address, with the motto on the outside. To avoid a long wait before hearing the result of the evaluation, in case an award has not been made, authors are required to send together with

the sealed envelope an open envelope containing the name and full address of a person with whom Directors of *Teylers Stichting* may enter into correspondence confidentially.

EVALUATION

The evaluation will be carried out by the members of Teylers Godgeleerd Genootschap (Prof. Dr. H.L. Beck, Dr. A.G. Hoekema, Dr. V. Kal, Prof. Dr. M.J.J. Menken, Prof. Dr. E. Noort, Prof. Dr. E.G.E. van der Wall) and will be communicated within seven months from the final date of submission in the form of a recommendation to the Directors of Teylers Stichting, who will decide within one month whether or not to give an award. This decision is final. All candidates will be notified by the Directors as soon as a decision has been made.

AWARD

The award consists of a gold medal struck from the seal of the Godgeleerd Genootschap. In addition, a foundation that does not wish to be publicly identified will grant the sum of €4500 to the author or authors of the winning entries to use as they see fit. The medal will be awarded to the winner(s) at a special ceremony in the *Teylers Museum* at Haarlem. Professional journals and the press as well as other interested persons and institutions will receive ample advance notice of the award ceremony.

PUBLICATION

The authors themselves will arrange for publication of their work, mentioning that it has received an award from *Teylers Stichting*. If desired, *Teylers Stichting* and its theological society may consider lending assistance.

Editors of scientific journals as well as other bodies wishing to draw the attention of their readers to the essay competition, are urged to advise interested candidates to consult the program for full details.

The programme of Teylers Godgeleerd Genootschap is available free of charge on request from Directors of Teylers Stichting, Spaarne 16, 2011 CH Haarlem, Netherlands, or can be consulted on: www.teylersmuseum.nl