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Lecture

Living civilly in a divided city: topicality of an old fear

Tuesday 17th June 2014
at 6pm

Simone Weil amphitheater
5, allée Jacques Berque,
Nantes

By

Patrick Boucheron,
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Patrick Boucheron is Professor of Medieval History at Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne. His research interests deal with global history with the perspective to renew the writing of history. He edited *Histoire du monde au XVe siècle* ('History of the World in the fifteenth century', Fayard, 2009, rééd. Pluriel 2012) and *Pour une histoire-monde* ('For a World-history', PUF, 2012). Among his latest publications: *Léonard et Machiavel* (Verdier, 2008, rééd. poche 2013), *L'entretemps. Conversations sur l'histoire* ('Meantime. Conversations about history', Verdier, 2012) and *Conjurer la peur. Sienna, 1338. Essai sur la force politique des images* ('Stave off fear. Sienna, 1338. Essay on the political power of images', Seuil, 2013).

Theme

The fresco painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the *Palazzo pubblico* (town hall) in Siena in 1338 is one of the most famous political paintings in the history of European art. It shows in an ample and detailed manner, the effects of the political choices made by the leaders of the town. Do they want to give way to the discord, to this slow subversion of the civic values that affect politics? Or will they be able to take on a fair and equitable government that pacifies the society without denying the dissent that founds it? The painter gives to see the cutting edge of political decision. We will discuss the political force of such a work, painted in a state of emergency, but still bound to be updated. In doing so, we tend to realize a historian approach seeking to explain, through the past, what troubles us today.