



LECTIO MAGISTRALIS

Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome

Friday 15 June 2018, 18.00 h.



# FRITS VAN OOSTROM

## *On cultural canons: uses and abuses in an age of identity politics*

*respondent: Joost Klarenbeek*

Following concerns about a fading sense of cultural identity in The Netherlands, over the last two decades the Dutch government has actively pursued a policy to enhance such feelings, including the establishment of a Canon on national heritage. As president of the national committee to draft such a Canon, Frits van Oostrom reflects on the results of this project, which in 2006 was published and implemented in the national school curriculum.

Over the past decade, the Dutch Canon not only has grown into a benchmark for numerous educational and museological projects, but has fueled many new initiatives on various scales, from a local to an international level. It also has inspired the Dutch Foreign Office in its presentation of The Netherlands to the wider world.

Frits van Oostrom is distinguished university professor at Utrecht University and the former president of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences. His pioneering work on medieval literary culture in the Low Countries has gained him unprecedented acclaim both in the scholarly world and amongst large audiences. Presently he is a KNIR senior fellow.

Joost Klarenbeek is deputy ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Italy. Trained as a historian in Utrecht and Paris, he has extensive experience in Dutch foreign policies.

*Followed by drinks.*



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