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A closer look at the repertoire used by Dutch youth movements in their quest for 'popular unity' (*volksseenheid*) in the interwar years

1. Enika Bushi

Chained to the past. Albania, (in)glorious road to democracy

Albania is in search of a European home. Ever since the collapse of communism, the Country has pursued European integration. The shared history and culture with Europe comes in support toward winning this challenge. However, part of that past, which Albania clings to, recalls 'the good old manners' specific to the self-made communism suffered by its people. This paper aims to discuss, through an intertemporal comparative study of choices made, the extent endogenous preferences and persistence of culture have affected the pace of transition. This paper argues, knowingly, that old [bad] habits die hard, bringing examples of persistence of power and its transposition into the present Albanian political sphere. The cultural institutions, legacy of the infamous communist period, appear to be significant in perpetuating the time lag of endless transition to democracy and Europe. In conclusion, it is argued that participatory democracy instillment is made possible by brain gain, and bottom-up influence on political actions. Even, in young democracies it is not enough having in place institutions or charismatic leaders, people are the ultimate actor to shape the public sphere.

2. Ville Häkkinen

Rhetoric and Ideology in Interwar Hungary

In this paper I shall present two cases, which will open new ways to interpret interwar Hungarian political history through rhetoric as a key to ideology. The interwar period in Hungarian history is often eponymously dubbed the Horthy Era, after Admiral Miklós Horthy, Regent of Hungary from 1920 to 1944. Popular narratives include the stereotype of "a kingdom without a King, ruled by an Admiral without a navy," as well as tendencies to see the political development as straightforward evolution from the counterrevolutionary Conservatism into Fascism. These views can be problematized by concentrating on rhetoric as political action. Horthy himself was never an autocratic leader, but in most cases ceded the power to the government; and whereas democracy in the contemporary sense was limited throughout the period, parliamentary politics remained polyphonic. Despite the seemingly solid position of one governing party¹, there actually occurred several power changes both within the ruling party and in the broader field of politics.

The policy formulation in post-WWI Hungary occurred in a state of transition and was affected by national and transnational power fluctuation. The revolutions of 1918 and 1919 as well as the defeat in the World War had shaken the old elites' perception of political stability, which was to be restored mainly through various history-based arguments. The active perpetrators of the counterrevolutionary violence were a remarkable, militant pressure group to be reckoned with. At the same time Hungary was subjected to international pressure from both the other successor states of Austria-Hungary and the Entente powers that demanded strict fulfilment of the terms of the Trianon peace treaty and also expected political reforms, but were later on satisfied with Hungary's stabilization through conservative government. Thus, the domestic politicians had to take into account all the above mentioned factors in their

¹ Keresztény-Keresztyén Földműves-, Kiszgazda- és Polgári Párt / Christian Smallholders, Agrarians and People's Party, usually referred to as Egységes Párt / Unity Party.

rhetoric and policy formulation in order to create credible and lasting position for themselves.

The strategy of my study is to analyse the rhetoric of the Hungarian political elite as a key to understanding ideology and its changes in debates during historical turning points. The leading politicians' speeches (both public and parliamentary ones) were tools of multisited negotiation, in which they endeavoured to connect ideological expectations with *Realpolitik*. Speeches can be read and interpreted as series of connecting acts, aimed to meet the expectations of diverse audiences. These speeches both discursively construct, maintain, challenge and reflect policies and their connections to ideological changes. By studying them in context, one can reveal the active politicking in an easily overlooked conservative system. Also, the influence and transfer of international ideas and their adaptation into Hungarian politics (e.g. German-oriented National Socialism versus domestic Hungarian radical Nationalism in the 1930s) becomes evident through the changes in rhetoric.

3. Laurien Hansma

Orangist concept of constitution 1795-1798

March 30, 1814, a new constitution came into effect in the Netherlands. A constitution that more or less was drafted by order of William Frederik, son of the stadholder who had fled in 1795. Aware of the precarious situation he was in, William Frederik shortly after his arrival announced that he would not accept the sovereignty without the guarantee of a constitution.² Starting-point of this constitution was a plan of the politician Gijsbert Karel van Hogendorp, in which he combined the political achievements of the prerevolutionary Republic, the Batavian Republic and the Kingdom of Holland of Louis Bonaparte.³

Given that in 1797 his father was averse to the idea of a written constitution, Willem Frederik's attitude could be considered as remarkable.⁴ Not only his fathers', also the opinion of the adherents of the House of Orange-Nassau was to retain the traditional meaning of the concept of constitution. Since the concept was subject of discussion during the patriot era, orangists did not have a very definite interpretation of the concept. They characterized both the Union of Utrecht (1579) and the state, with all its rules and conventions from the past, as the constitution of the Republic. However, the request for a written constitution by William Frederik in 1814, makes clear that something had changed in the orangist interpretation of this concept.

This presentation deals with this remarkable shift. To further examine the foundations of this shift, I will focus on the years in which the constitutional debate was most vehement: 1795-1798. These years showed an intense debate about the realization of a constitution, which eventually resulted in the *Staatsregeling* of 1798. The framing of the *Staatsregeling*, with its preceding Rights of Men and Citizen, was a Batavian achievement that had no precedent in the history of the Netherlands.

² N.C.F. van Sas, 'Onder waarborging eener wijze constitutie. Grondwet en politiek 1813-1848', in: N.C.F. van Sas and H. te Velde (ed), *De eeuw van de Grondwet. Grondwet en politiek in Nederland, 1798-1917* (Deventer 1998) 114-145, there 117 and: Jeroen Koch, *Koning Willem I. 1772-1843* (Amsterdam 2013) 246.

³ Van Sas, 'Onder waarborging eener wijze constitutie', 117-120 and Bart van Poelgeest, 'Tussen oud en nieuw: het ontwerpen van de grondwet als een rechtshistorisch mozaïek', in: Ido de Haan, Paul den Hoed and Henk te Velde (ed), *Een nieuwe staat. Het begin van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* (Amsterdam 2014) 67-76, there 67.

⁴ Koch, *Koning Willem I*, 246-247.

Therefore, the attention this had gotten recently, is completely legitimate.⁵ Logically these studies emphasize the break with the old Republic and its orangist government. However, not all orangists were abhorrent of the new political ideas of the Batavians. Some of them were in a certain way reform minded.⁶ In this presentation I want to offer a broader perspective on the changing concept of constitution, by asking the question to what extent the orangist constitutional concept altered during the first three years of the Batavian Republic.

4. Krzysztof Kirdzik

Political liberalization in Yugoslavia after the fall of Aleksandar Rankovic in 1966. Was it the beginning?

One of the turning points for the postwar history of Yugoslav federation appeared to happen in 1966. The fall of Ministry of Interior - Aleksandar Rankovic - marked a new era and symbolically opened a Pandora's Box. Barely few years of real political liberalization was enough for questioning the basics of multinational federation. It resulted in opening an important discussion concerning relations between Serbia and Croatia and was just an introduction for the 1980s and 1990s outburst of nationalism. This period ended severely in 1971/1972 with the withdrawal of liberal politicians, both in Croatia and Serbia, as well as with harsh political repressions. Therefore I do believe that the decade of 1960s should play a key role in understanding how and why Yugoslavia collapsed. There were many internal and international factors which influenced the further development of Yugoslavia: Americanization of socialistic society (Radina Vučetić called it Coca-Cola Socialism), generation gap in the country leadership, politicization of masses, *détente* atmosphere and attempts to ease the tensions between blocks and, of course, many more.

In my paper I would like to analyze a few chosen aspects of the short period of political liberalization in Yugoslavia and how it influenced further development of the country in the context of its collapse. On the basis of archival resources from the Archive of Yugoslavia in Belgrade and memoirs of some leading Yugoslav politicians from 1960s (like Miko Tripalo, Savka Dabcevic-Kucar or Latinka Perovic), I would like to particularly examine the interdependences between demands for more autonomy and radicalization of political movements in Yugoslavia.

5. René Koekkoek

Rethinking Citizenship after the Jacobin Terror

Throughout the 1790s in the Dutch Republic, the United States, as well as in France after 1794, numerous reflections on several aspects and stages of the Terror appeared in pamphlets, political tractates, and journals, as well as in diaries and

⁵ See for example: Mart Rutjes, *Door gelijkheid gegrepen. Democratie, burgerschap en staat in Nederland 1795-1801* (Nijmegen 2012) and Joris Oddens, *Pioniers in schaduwbeeld. Het eerste parlement van Nederland 1796-1798* (Nijmegen 2012).

⁶ S.R.E. Klein, *Patriots republikenisme. Politieke cultuur in Nederland (1766-1787)* (Amsterdam 1995) 207. See for example: Wyger R.E. Velema, *Enlightenment and conservatism in the Dutch Republic. The political thought of Elie Luzac (1721-1796)* (Assen 1993) and I.J.H. Worst, 'Staat, constitutie en politieke wil. Over F.W. Pestel en de variëteit van het achttiende-eeuwse orangisme', *BMGN* 1987 (3) 498-515.

private letters. From time to time, it was the talk of the day and the subject of heated discussions in assemblies, coffee houses, taverns, literary and societal clubs. If revolutionary developments between 1789 and 1791 had astonished commentators across the Atlantic, news of the more violent episodes coming in from 1792 onwards was right-out disturbing for those sympathetic to the principles of the revolution, while for more conservative and sceptical observers it only confirmed their suspicions.

My paper explores to what extent the Jacobin Terror shattered the horizon of a universal or transnational struggle for citizen emancipation. Dutch and American revolutionaries came to see 'their' revolutions as fundamentally different from the French experience, and accordingly distanced themselves from a supposedly transnational consensus on what revolutionary citizenship should look like. I argue that the diminishing of a transnational discourse on citizenship and its divergence into nationalized models of citizenship coincided with a deradicalization of this very same discourse. In this regard, the most salient topics of public debate and reflection were not only to what extent the masses should be actively involved in politics. Also the direction or aspiration of civic engagement was reconsidered in light of the Terror: should citizen activism involve disagreement and conflict or should it be aimed at national conciliation without faction and party spirit? The Terror, then, urged American, Dutch, and French thinkers and politicians, to reconsider the desirability, nature and extent of ordinary citizens' active participation in a system of representative democracy.

6. Naomi Lloyd-Jones

Scottish Nationalism, Liberalism and the Home Rule crisis

'For the first time since the Union, they will have it in their power to determine whether Scotland is to recover the management of its own affairs.' This assertion would not appear out of place amongst the literature produced by the Scottish National Party (SNP) in preparation for September's independence referendum. However, it was made nearly 150 years ago, by the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA), in an attempt to encourage electors to support candidates pledged to the reinstatement of an Edinburgh parliament.

Recent scholarship on nineteenth-century Scotland has been dominated by the concept of 'Unionist-nationalism', an apparently contradictory term coined to explain the absence of a resistance-centred national identity. According to this model, the legislative union with England gave Scots the chance to express their nation's distinctive attributes within a wider British and imperial framework. The SHRA deviated from this apparent norm, and in the 1880s-1900s articulated a fundamentally different vision of the 1707 Union, its consequences and of how to rectify its defects. Home Rulers warned that Scotland was in danger of becoming little more than a province of a Conservative England inherently uninterested in dealing with Scottish 'grievances' in an overburdened and ill-equipped 'Imperial Parliament.'

This paper will have two main focuses. In the first instance, it will tell the forgotten story of Scottish Home Rule and its proponents, and shine much needed light on the SHRA's re-evaluation of the Anglo-Scottish relationship. Secondly, it will

consider the importance of this alternative interpretation in informing the organisation's actions, and, in particular, its attitude toward the Liberal party. Home Rulers were able to gain a foothold within the Liberal organisational machinery and succeeded in pushing the issue to the forefront. However, notwithstanding its promotion of Irish self-government and its position as the premier party north of the Tweed, the Liberal party rebuffed the SHRA's advances. It was castigated as a result and the SHRA concluded that neither a Westminster party nor its Scottish caucus could hope to adequately represent the Scottish people.

My paper will speak to several of the themes the conference intends to highlight. It will connect with the history of popular politics and movements, parliamentary history and culture, and state building and institutions. It aims at enhancing our understanding of how national and political identities are shaped and how this influences the relationships parties forge with the 'nations' they claim to represent. Moreover, falling as it does a little over a week before the independence referendum, this conference affords an ideal opportunity to reflect on how the study of political history can help us to appreciate the dynamics of current debates. There are clear parallels in the discourse once employed by the SHRA and that utilised by the SNP today, with both informed by the conviction that the Scottish people are best placed to understand their requirements.

7. Eoghan Moran

Mass Politics and the Crisis of the 1930s: Transnational Origins of the French and Spanish Popular Fronts

This paper aims to suggest how *histoire croisée* methods may be used to provide a fresh transnational interpretation of national political developments. It uses as a case study the French interaction with the October 1934 rebellion in Spain, and its influence on the formation of Popular Fronts in both countries.

The decade of the 1930s saw a sharp reconfiguration of the political landscape in France and in Spain. The disunity and listlessness of the left, grappling with the political, social, economic, cultural and technological uncertainties of the post-1918 status quo, was amplified by the onset of the depression and the tarnishing of the old Wilsonian republican ideal in both countries. Yet by the decade's end, the political identity, culture and practices of left-wing parties and unions had been recast under the grand mobilising project of the popular fronts, integrating mass politics and extraparliamentarism as adjuncts to traditional party-political practices.

Over this period, the distinct, but remarkably parallel, environments of France and Spain saw movements on the left to adapt to current societal realities, searching through trial and error for an anti-crisis project that would ultimately crystallize around social republicanism and the banner of 'anti-fascism'. This paper argues that the reconfiguration process was an intrinsically entangled phenomenon, passing across the Pyrenees, as the French and Spanish left observed, imitated, modified and transported innovations. Far from a purely home-grown or 'made in Moscow' project, as has traditionally been argued, the two popular fronts evolved domestically at the level of grass-roots and political elites, but were self-consciously inspired by contexts and challenges across the border.

Events such as Spain's 1934 anti-government uprising, which this study proposes as an illustrative case study, acted as a focal point. Firstly, lessons could be learned and domestic politics analyzed in a foreign mirror; secondly, concrete transfers were generated, transporting personnel and ideas with them (exiles and refugees, mass movements for solidarity and aid, press wars, bilateral security and governmental contact, 'extraordinary renditions'). Political developments in each country thus had a substantive and enduring reciprocal effect over this period. Consequently, neither a purely comparative nor transfer study can tell the full picture of this closely entangled development.

However, transfer is rarely passive, and if events in Spain resonated with French public opinion, this was partly constructed as a mobilising strategy. In both cases, the representation of the neighbour partly determined the content, vector and direction of the transfer. While grasping for solutions to common crises that had not existed to their traditional worldview, the French and Spanish left could thus generate points of contact and exchange, parables and models, and domestic catalysts, through events such as the 1934 Spanish uprising.

This paper therefore argues that political developments on the left in France and Spain in the 1930s should properly be understood not as 'mono-national' convergent evolutions, but as dialogue across a semi-permeable border. This case study thus critically engages with methodological questions relevant to the broader study of transnationalism, political mobilisation, and representation.

8. Camiel Oomen

A closer look at the repertoire used by Dutch youth movements in their quest for 'popular unity' (*volkseenheid*) in the interwar years.

In the interwar years, popular politics in the Netherlands was very much a case of the "moral communities" (Piet de Rooy: *morele gemeenschap*). Nonetheless, a strong call for more national or 'popular unity' (*volkseenheid*) was evident in these years and especially in the 1930s. The "moral communities" were very good at binding the different communities internally, or at least they succeeded in creating a strong feeling of emotional differentness towards the 'other'.

However, the longing for unity was felt throughout Dutch society, all the more so because of this feeling of differentness, especially in the 1930s, when the Netherlands were hit hard by the worldwide economic crisis and the European political turmoil made the future look even more bleak.

Still some Dutch youths or, better put, young adults were trying to instil the feeling of unity in the Dutch people. Together with others they were gathering to become a very loosely tied 'movement', understood as "*de eenheidsdenkers*" (the unity-thinkers) by anthropologist Rob van Ginkel and as "*een stroming van Vernieuwing*" (a movement of renewal) by historian Wichert ten Have.⁷

⁷ Barbara Henkes, 'Voor Volk en Vaderland. Over de omgang met wetenschap en politiek in de volkskunde.' [accessed 21/11/2011, <http://www.meertens.knaw.nl/meertensnet/wdb.php?sel=139546>]; Rob van Ginkel, *Op zoek naar eigenheid: denkbeelden en discussies over cultuur en identiteit in Nederland* (Den Haag 1999); Wichert ten Have, *De Nederlandse Unie. Aanpassing, vernieuwing en confrontatie in bezettingstijd 1940-1941* (Amsterdam 1999).

For instance the “*Volkseenheidsconferenties van Woudschoten*” in the mid-1930s were gatherings of young adults who wanted to find new ways of forging a “*volkseenheid*” of the Dutch. When we take a closer look at the participating youth organizations, some of these organizations in particular had a longer tradition of presenting themselves not as neutral as such, but as standing above party lines and religious divides. The movements in particular are the pacifist *Studenten Vredes Actie*, which was closely aligned with the *Jongeren Vredes Actie*, and the nationalistic *Nationaal Jongeren Verbond* – these two antagonistic movements were both founded around 1925 and consisted of young adults aged between 18 and 35. Although they were rather small movements, their goals were far-reaching, the *Jongeren Vredes Actie* worked toward world peace and the *Nationaal Jongeren Verbond* toward spreading the “*Nationale Gedachte*” (National Idea) to the whole of the Dutch nation. The repertoire with which these movements made the Dutch people aware of their aims was quite different, and it is this repertoire that is the main subject of the paper. On the one hand the paper will look at the various mass manifestations initiated by the *Nationaal Jongeren Verbond* in the 1930s that propagated the idea of ‘popular unity’, and on the other hand at the efforts put in by the *Jongeren Vredes Actie* to unite the different religious and pillarized Dutch youth and young adults’ movements into a more coherent force for change of the Dutch society. A general conclusion will be drawn on the impact the different forms of repertoire had on the Dutch society of the time.