

New approaches to the history of nationalism

Research School Political History

Summer school

22-26 June 2020

Leiden University

Location: P.J. Vethgebouw 0.06; Nonnensteeg 3; Leiden

Topic

Nations are ‘imagined communities’ that are constructed through ‘invented traditions’. Based on the classical studies by Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm and Ernest Gellner, this still is the dominant modernist interpretation of nations and nationalism. Recently, however, various innovative studies have provided fresh interpretations of the rise and evolution of nationalism over the last few centuries. During the summer school, we will discuss a number of these perspectives and also explore how these can be applied in practice. Well-known experts will present new views on the early modern origins of nationalism, the role of banal nationalism, the concept of national indifference, the influence of the spatial turn, the rise of right-wing populism and the impact of nationalism on the decolonization process. The keynote speaker will be Siniša Malešević (Professor of Sociology, University College Dublin), one of the most prolific voices in the field of nationalism studies today. Although the geographical focus of the course will be on Europe, it will be possible to give a presentation dealing with other parts of the world.

Coordinators: Eric Storm and Diederik Smit (Institute for History, Leiden University)

Programme

Monday 22 June

Morning/early afternoon:

Margrit van der Steen (Research School Political History): Welcome

Diederik Smit (Leiden University) and Eric Storm (Leiden University): Introduction (historiography and practical details)

We will provide a short overview of the principle debates within the field of nationalism studies and give some more information on the practicalities of the summer course.

Reading:

Eric Storm, 'A New Dawn in Nationalism Studies? Some Fresh Incentives to Overcome Historiographical Nationalism', *European History Quarterly* (2018) 113-129.

Siniša Malešević (University College Dublin): key-note lecture Grounded Nationalisms in Space and Time (staff members of PCNI and LUNN also invited) Location: P.J. Vethgebouw 1.01; Nonnensteeg 3.

In this lecture I explore the complex and contradictory character of nationhood and nationalisms. I start with a concept of grounded nationalism. I explain the meaning of this concept and then analyse how it operates in the wider social and historical context. In particular I explore the organisational, ideological and micro-interactional processes that underpin the rise of grounded nationalisms throughout the world.

Reading: 'Introduction: The Tenacity of Nationalisms' from S. Malešević, *Grounded Nationalisms: A Sociological Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2019) 1-21.

Drinks

Evening: Conference dinner

Tuesday 23 June

Morning:

Siniša Malešević (University College Dublin): 'Small' and 'Greater' Nations: Empire and Nationalism in the nineteenth century, Ireland and the Balkans

In this lecture I compare different strategies of legitimation deployed by the nationalist movements in the 19th and early 20th century Balkans and Ireland. The paper zooms in on the changing dynamics of imperial and national legacies by exploring how specific social movements strategically deploy concepts such as the 'small' or 'greater' nation to facilitate different nationalist projects.

Reading: 'What Makes a Small Nation?' chapter 5 from S. Malešević, *Grounded Nationalisms: A Sociological Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2019) 111-135.

Maarten Van Ginderachter (University of Antwerp): Everyday Nationalism: how can historians study nationhood among ordinary people?

Michael Billig's theory of banal nationalism is based on the assumption that the absence of an explicit discourse on the nation should be interpreted as the unmindful presence of nationalism and that the mass media faithfully represent or reflect the discourses of 'ordinary people'. Recent historical research of 'national indifference' in imperial Austria has inverted the correlation between the ubiquity of nationalist discourses and their impact in society. In this talk I will assess these conflicting frameworks through a case study of the rank-and-file of the social-democratic Belgian Workers' Party at the close of the nineteenth century. To this end I will use a unique source of working-class voices: the so-called 'propaganda pence' or

‘proletarian tweets’ from the Flemish-speaking city of Ghent. These sources reveal a Twitter-like transcript of proletarian consciousness.

Reading: chapter 8 (Proletarian Tweets) and 9 (Language, the Flemish Movement, and the Nation) in: Maarten Van Ginderachter, *The everyday nationalism of workers. A social history of modern Belgium* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019)

Afternoon:

Jasper van der Steen (Leiden University): Nationalism in Early Modern Europe? The case of the Low Countries

History is an important element of nationalism. In post-1800 Europe, authorities and interest groups had the political motivation and an increasing number of mass media at their disposal to circulate a 'national' outlook on their country's past. But national history was not a modern invention. During this meeting we will discuss the political use of the past in pre-modern Europe with a focus on the Low Countries and explore what it can teach us in the context of nationalism studies.

Reading:

- Aviel Roshwald, 'The Perennialist View', in: Stefan Berger and Eric Storm, eds, *Writing the History of Nationalism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019) 83-105.

- Jasper van der Steen, 'Remembering the Revolt of the Low Countries: Historical Canon Formation in the Dutch Republic and Habsburg Netherlands, 1566–1621', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 49:3 (2018) 713-742.

Wednesday 24 June

Morning:

Jan Rock & Stefan Poland (University of Amsterdam): Charting cultural nationalism in Europe: concepts and tools

In this workshop we will discuss the study of nationalism from a cultural perspective. To do so, we will first define the theoretical stance and basic concepts of the cultural study of nationalism, and operationalize them using Joep Leerssen's matrix of the 'cultivation of culture'. Secondly, we will present the *Encyclopedia of Romantic Nationalism in Europe*, which charts and visualizes European cultural nationalism in the nineteenth century, and Nodegoat, the digital tool used to do so. The Encyclopedia and various examples of data visualizations can be found at <http://ernie.uva.nl>

Reading:

Joep Leerssen, 'Nationalism and the Cultivation of Culture', *Nations and Nationalism* (2006) 559-578.

All background texts for one cultural community in Joep Leerssen ed., *Encyclopedia of Romantic Nationalism in Europe* (Amsterdam 2018) or ernie.uva.nl (thus read historical context, language, traditions, sights and sounds, texts and stories and society of one particular country/national community; preferably not Netherlands, Germany or Flanders).

Eric Storm (Leiden University): The Spatial Turn: Nationalism between Regionalism and Transnational Approaches

Recently, scholars have started to criticize the dominant methodological nationalism in the social sciences and the humanities. This also implies that it is not totally obvious anymore to study nationalism within the confines of the nation(-state). Influenced by the spatial turn historians have begun to study the construction of national identities at a local or regional level, while others have focused on transnational influences, for instance of tourists or migrants. In this lecture I will focus on both aspects by showing how international tourists heavily influenced the construction of regional identities and indirectly also had a very strong impact on the national self-awareness.

Reading:

Eric Storm, 'The spatial turn and the history of nationalism: Nationalism between regionalism and transnational approaches' in: Stefan Berger and Eric Storm eds., *Writing the History of Nationalism* (London: Bloomsbury 2019) 215-237.

Eric Storm, 'Tourism and the Construction of Regional Identities' in: Xosé M. Núñez Seixas and Eric Storm eds., *Regionalism and Modern Europe: Identity Construction and Movements from 1890 to the Present Day* (London: Bloomsbury 2019) 99-118.

Afternoon:

Students prepare their powerpoint presentations + tutorials by Smit and Storm

Thursday 25 June

Morning

Carolien Stolte (Leiden University): Nationalism and Decolonization

This session will depart from the notion that decolonization and the Cold War were interrelated processes. The 1940s and 1950s were crucial decades of nation-building across Afro-Asia. In the same decades, new international organizations and other forms of international connection gave rise to a vibrant Afro-Asian movement that was radically internationalist and included activists whose visions of (revolutionary) world order went far beyond the nation state. This session will investigate how these different ideas interacted in India during the decolonization era.

Reading:

Su Lin Lewis and Carolien Stolte, 'Other Bandungs: Afro-Asian Internationalisms and the Cold War', *Journal of World History* (2019) 1-19.

Naoko Shimazu, 'Diplomacy as Theatre: Staging the Bandung Conference', *Modern Asian Studies* (2014) 225-252.

Koen Vossen (Radboud University): Populism and nationalism: two of a kind?

Populism and nationalism seem to have a lot in common. Both are considered to be thin centered ideologies that focus their attention on the nation. Therefore it is sometimes hard to determine where nationalism ends and populism begins. In this lecture we will attempt to clarify the relationship between both.

Reading:

Michael Freeden, 'Is nationalism a distinct ideology?', *Political Studies* 46-4 (1998) 748-765.

Ben Stanley. 'The thin ideology of populism', *Journal of political ideologies* 13-1 (2008), 95-110.

Afternoon:

PowerPoint presentations by students

Assignments:

For 5 or 6 ECTS

- Study required readings (1-2 articles per lecture) before the start of the summer school
- Participate actively in all the sessions of the summer school
- Hand in a draft research proposal (2000-2500 words), for instance for a major paper, an article, a thesis or a PhD dissertation. Area, period and theme can be chosen freely by the student, but he/she should adopt some of the methods and concepts presented in the readings of the summer school and also propose possible primary source material. Deadline 16 June 2020.
- Give a presentation (with PowerPoint) on a possible innovative research project on the history of nationalism (based on the draft proposal). The presentation should last 8-10 minutes and include research question, method and critical analysis of a primary source.
- Write a short reflection of about 400 words on your own proposal taking into account the discussions and feedback received during the summer school. Deadline Friday 3 July 2020.

For 3 ECTS

- Study required readings (1-2 articles per lecture) before the start of the summer school
- Participate actively in all the sessions of the summer school
- Hand in a draft research proposal (300-500 words), for instance for a major paper, an article, a thesis or a PhD dissertation. Area, period and theme can be chosen freely by the student, but he/she should adopt some of the methods and concepts presented in the readings of the summer school and also propose possible primary source material. Deadline 16 June 2020.
- Give a presentation (with PowerPoint) on a possible innovative research project on the history of nationalism (based on the draft proposal). The presentation should last 8-10 minutes and include research question, method and critical analysis of a primary source.