Szabolcs Pogonyi: Understanding neo-nationalism: theories, concepts and methodologies
Fall 2017, Elective course, 2 CEU Credits

Course description

The main objective of this course is to introduce students into the state of art scholarship and debates in the study of nationalism, and help them to critically engage with and think of contemporary neo-nationalism and populist nationalism. The course aims at familiarizing students with key concepts and theories as well as main methodological approaches in nationalism studies. A special emphasis will be given to the applicability and limits of classical nationalism theories and methodologies in the analysis of contemporary nationalist movements. Throughout the course, we will test the relevant interdisciplinary methodologies through comparative analyses and case studies. In particular, the course will draw on literature from sociology, political science, history, international relations, gender studies, and anthropology, offering a critical and interdisciplinary approach to the study of nationalism.

The course will start with a short discussion on contemporary nationalism. We will explore why nationalism is still an important moving force in contemporary politics and why its scholarly study is still relevant. After the introduction, we will go on to explore the literature on contemporary populist nationalism. We will investigate if and to what extent populist politics can be considered as a novel form of nationalism. Then we will overview the classical nationalism debates, and discuss to what extent the main explanatory framework in nationalism studies (modernism, constructivism, primordialism, ethno-symbolism, cognitive approaches) are relevant to the study of contemporary nationalist politics. More specifically, we will look into the causes and political implications of different types of populist nationalism as well as neo-nationalist mobilization strategies and discourses. Throughout these classes, we will explore the most important research methodologies in the study of nationalism, and their relevance to research on contemporary forms of populist nationalism.

In the second part of the course, we will investigate the intersection of gender studies and nationalism, international relations and nationalism, and anthropology and nationalism. These topics will be covered with the help of three guest speakers who will present their recent research. The last class is reserved for student presentations.

Requirements

Students registered for this course are expected to attend classes and participate in in-class discussions. All students must read all the readings, and present one of the readings. In-class presentations should sum up and critically analyze the argument of the assigned readings. Presentations are expected to contextualize ideas by drawing on literature not listed in the syllabus, and students are encouraged to assess the implications of the presented theories through relevant case studies. In addition, students are also expected to
present their book review in the last session. In these presentations, students are expected to contextualize and critically engage with the book they present.

Students are to write an extended review essay (4,000 words) on a recent book related to the course. Possible titles will be suggested, but students are also welcome to recommend monographs for review. These review essays should aim for a publishable quality; if this requirement is met, instructors will provide assistance for seeking out potential journals.

Course evaluation

Class participation and activity: 20%
In-class presentations: 30%
Final paper (extended book review): 50%

Schedule and readings

Class 1.
Introduction: why nationalism matters?

Recommended readings


Class 2.
The contemporary debate: populism and neo-nationalism

Readings


**Recommended readings**


**Class 3.**
**The study of nationalism: classifications and key concepts**

**Readings**


**Recommended readings**


**Class 4.**
**Explaining nationalism: modernism v. ethno-symbolism**

**Readings**


**Recommended readings**


[http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/gellner/Warwick0.html](http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/gellner/Warwick0.html)


**Class 5.**
**The cognitive turn in the study of nationalism**

**Readings**


**Recommended reading**


**Class 6.**
**Gender Studies and Nationalism I**

**Readings**


**Class 7.**
**Gender Studies and Nationalism II**

[Guest: Elissa Helms, Department of Gender Studies]

**Readings**

Elissa Helms, “Rejecting Angelina: Bosnian War Rape Survivors and the Ambiguities of Sex in War,” *Slavic Review* 73/1 (Fall 2014), 612-634

*Recommended reading*

**Class 8.**  
**International Relations and Nationalism I**

*Readings*


**Class 9.**  
**International Relations and Nationalism II**  
[Guest: Erin Jenne, Department of International Relations]

*Readings*


Erin Jenne, "Nationalism, Populism and Foreign Policy in Postcommunist Europe" (Draft paper) November

*Recommended reading*

**Class 10.**  
**Anthropology and nationalism I**

*Readings*


Class 11.
**Anthropology and nationalism II**
[Guest: Margit Feischmidt, Hungarian Academy of Sciences]

*Readings*

TBA

Class 12.
**Student presentations**