



Identity, Culture and the Symbolic Construction of Europe

Course description

The central objective is to introduce students to an understudied dimension of European integration – the construction of a European imagined community – and to reflect on categories too often used uncritically such as 'Europe', 'History of Europe', 'European identity', or 'European culture'. This reflection shall provide them with useful theoretical and empirical tools to assess critically past and current representations of Europe as well as a whole range of EU policies.

The course is divided in two parts.

In the first four sessions, Prof. Schaub adopts a historical perspective to explore those main concepts of European identity, consciousness or culture, and their emergence on the long term, from the Early Modern Times to WWI.

In the last four sessions, Prof. Calligaro focusses on the contemporary uses, in European policies, of these historical legacies to promote a sense of belonging to the European Union among the citizens.

In more detail, the main objectives of the course are the following:

- Firstly, it will allow to students to understand that the consciousness of being European is being shaped by a set of historical heritages. This is not a simple history, since divergent and successive interpretations of these legacies have been companions of a very progressive awareness of the existence of a shared belonging. It will take into account the fact that the regions that constitute Europe today have defined their historical identity through the relations they have sustained with each other, but also through confrontations with the extra-European worlds.
- It will discuss topics as important as the birth of specifically European political institutions and regimes, the characteristics of the processes of confessionalization and secularization, the progress of scientific knowledge and philosophical rationality, imperial and colonial expansion, the birth of racial ideologies, the invention of literary, visual or musical languages that are unlike any other.



- It will provide students with insights into the historical, theoretical, and conceptual backgrounds of contemporary debates about European identity, especially the debate regarding the definitions to be given to European culture and European civilization. Students should acquire a thorough knowledge of the concrete strategies conceived by the EU institutions and other actors to promote a European imagined community and to establish connections between the EU and its citizens;
- Finally, using these theoretical and practical insights gained in the course, students should be able to assess EU action in the symbolic, cultural and communicational fields critically, demonstrating the ability to identify the relevant sources, actors, and methodological frameworks. Students should have the capacity to use this reflection on identity construction and political legitimacy to contextualize developments in policy areas in which they specialize (law, economics, political governance, foreign affairs, etc.).

At the end of the course, students will have acquired the following knowledge and skills:

1. Students will gain knowledge and understanding of the main political and cultural processes in the long term history of Europe and their legacies and effects in contemporary European politics and in EU policies;
2. This will enable them to understand and discuss the respective literature and to apply this knowledge in their autonomous analysis and assessment of EU policies in the field of education, culture, communication;
3. This will allow them to formulate judgments on more normative and conceptual issues relating to the construction of European identity and to strategies developed by EU actors to foster a European consciousness;
4. Participants will finally be able to communicate their analyses to others – fellow students, scientific staff and practitioners – and discuss these in a critical manner.

Course Contents

04 October

Session 1: Introductory lecture. Beyond and behind the Nation-State

1. European history, national histories
2. Classical and Medieval heritage



Readings:

- Hagen Schulze, *States, nations, and nationalism : from the Middle Ages to the present* Oxford, UK ; Cambridge, Mass., USA : Blackwell, 1996. Chap. 2&3

Students' presentations:

1. What constitutes a nation?
2. How are former legacies passed on in the course of history?

05 October

Session 2: What is modern in Early Modern and Modern Times?

1. The Ottoman Challenge
2. The Oceanic Expansion
3. Breakdown of Christianity

Readings:

- Franco Cardini, *Europe and Islam*, Oxford, U.K. ; Malden, Mass. : Blackwell, 2001, Chap. 9&10.

Students' presentations:

1. How important was the rivalry between Christianity and Islam in European history?
2. How to define colonial situations?

11 October

Session 3: The processes of politicization in Europe and its colonies

1. Is modern State the main invention of Europe?
2. Expansion, colonialism, imperialism, racism

Readings:

- Tamar Herzog, *A Short History of European Law: The Last Two and a Half Millennia*, Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2018. Chap. 7, 8, & 9.

Students' presentations:

1. What constitutes a sovereign State?
2. Is racism unique to Europe?



12 October

Session 4: Europe on the move

1. Revolutions in science and societies
2. Cultures on the move
3. Europe's suicide

Readings:

- Roger Chartier, *Forms and meanings : texts, performances, and audiences from codex to computer*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995. Chap. 3

Students' presentations:

1. Has European culture always considered itself superior to others?
2. Tradition, innovation, avant-garde: how can these three realities coexist?

18 October

Session 5: The European Union: A constructed imagined community?

3. Theories and models of collective identity
4. The symbolic construction of a European community

Readings:

- Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1995, Chap. 1;
- Cirila Toplak & Irena Šumi (2012) Europe(an Union): Imagined Community in the Making? *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 20:1, 7-28.

Students' presentations:

3. Visions of European identity in the interwar period (which place for Europe in the Nazi and Stalinist regimes, in the liberal democracies, etc....?)
4. European identity in the 1948 Congress of Europe (Cultural Committee chaired by Salvador de Madriaga) and in the creation of the College of Europe (1949)

19 October

Session 6: Constructing Europe through culture

1. An instrumentalization of European Heritage? The case of the European Capitals of Culture
2. The alternative visions of the Council of Europe



Readings:

- Cris Shore, "'In uno plures" (?) EU Cultural Policy and the Governance of Europe', *Cultural Analysis*, 2006, no. 5, pp. 7-26.
- Oriane Calligaro, 'From 'European Cultural Heritage' to 'Cultural Diversity'? The Changing Core Values of European Cultural Policy', *Politique européenne*, 2014, n° 45, pp. 60-85.

Students' presentations:

3. "A Christian Club?" The place of Christianity in contemporary European politics
4. Postcolonial Europe : Which place for the "Others" in the EU's self-representation?

25 October

Session 7: Constructing Europe through historiography and memory

3. A European University? The case of historical research and historiography
4. Which common memory of the traumatic European past?

Readings:

- Isabelle Petit, 'Dispelling a Myth? The Fathers of Europe and the Construction of a Euro-Identity', *European Law Journal*, vol. 12, no. 5, 2006, pp. 661-679;
- Annabelle Littoz-Monnet, 'The EU Politics of Commemoration: Can Europeans Remember Together?', *West European Politics*, 2012, vol. 35, no. 5, pp. 1182-1202.

Students' presentations:

1. The memory of imperialism and slavery in contemporary European politics
2. European identity as perceived and/or experienced outside the EU (in neighbouring/candidate countries or in other continents)

26 October

Session 8: Constructing Europe through symbols

4. What are the symbols of Europe?
5. A travel into the euro iconography

Readings:

- Ian Manners (2011) "Symbolism in European integration", *Comparative European Politics*, 9, 243–268
- Kathleen McNamara, 'Imaginary Europe: The euro as a symbol and practice', in: Giovanni Moro (ed.), *The Single Currency and European Citizenship*, London, 2013, pp. 22-35.



Students' presentations:

1. Artistic representations of Europe (visual arts, literature, films...)
2. Europe in the museums (visual representations and narratives of Europe in national museums, or in "European" museums: Parlementarium and House of European History in Brussels, Mucem in Marseille, Europa experience in Paris...)

Teaching method

This course mainly consists of lectures.

Substantial time will be devoted to discussions and presentations and students are warmly invited to participate.

Presentations in class

On a voluntary basis, students can make an oral presentation of 10 minutes (2 for each session). The topics suggested in this syllabus can be adapted, and **other related topics can be proposed and discussed with the professor**, as long as they remain coherent with the general theme of the session.

Course material

Besides the compulsory readings for each session, students are invited to consult the following books:

- Oriane Calligaro, *Negotiating Europe: The EU Promotion of Europeanness*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013;
- Kathleen R. McNamara, *The Politics of Everyday Europe: Constructing Authority in the European Union*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015;

Evaluation

- **Take-home essay (40%)**: 1400-1800 words max;
- **Final written exam (40%)**: 2-hours exam with several questions on the course content.
- **Participation (20%)**: attendance, constructive participation in the class discussions and, if volunteer, a presentation in class.