

## Course Description

### Ethnicity and Nationalism



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### Course description

Who are we? Who do we belong to, identify with, or distinguish ourselves from? Do we have "stable", "unchangeable" ethnic and national identity? With the help of cultural anthropological research, we can see multiply examples how identity is a complex and fluid component of cultures. All these approaches and studies can give us great opportunities to think and re-think our ties towards "ourselves" and "others".

Furthermore, phenomena and significances of ethnicity and nationalism are specifically interesting and important for understanding cultural identities in Eastern and Central Europe. Despite our historical and socio-cultural similarities, the knowledge about our common historical contexts, social and political problems could be deeper in Eastern and Central Europe.

Therefore, the aim of the course is to interpret ethnicity, nationalism, and cultural identity from a cultural anthropological perspective with the help of broad research and descriptions of the Hungarian culture and numerous case studies, slides, movies, arts, online media clips and lyrics. The objectives and case studies of the course familiarize the students with the variety and complexity of ethnicity and nationalism.

Consequently, the goal of the proposed topics is to give relevant knowledge and interpretation skills to the students about the cultural-social-political processes and historical-ethnographical contexts of different cultures, minorities, religious groups, different identities, subcultures, local cultures, national myths, rituals and recent folklore.

The course will give opportunity for interactions between the students and the lecturer to discuss and dispute the arising questions.

The long-term goal of the course is for the students to interpret their cultural identity in a reflective and analytical way using the approaches, theories and interpretations applied in the semester.

## **Structure of the course**

**1.module:** Main terms and theories of cultural identity, ethnicity, and nationalism from an interdisciplinary social science approach

**2.module:** Illustration and additions of the terms and theories with questions and examples of the Hungarian cultural identity

**3.module: Students' presentations individually or in groups.** Analysis of specific issues with help of social and cultural anthropological theories, research results, studies, and case studies

**4.module:** Summary of the questions and topics of the semester. Discussion

## **Requirements of the course:**

Participation in the lectures

**Giving a presentation** individually or in a group **or** writing a minimum 10,000 characters' **essay** linked to the problems and questions of the semester.

Students can use books, studies from the reading list of the course but they can also use different theories and writings.

## **Module aim**

*Problems and questions analysed during the semester.*

*Presentations or essays should be related to at least one of the topics.*

## **Terms and theories of cultural identity, ethnicity, and nationalism**

During the introductory lectures students learn about the main terms and theories of cultural identity, ethnicity, and nationalism. In connection to theories, we will deal with the following topics and approaches: culture and personality, ethno symbolism, modernity and nationalism, cognitive synthesis, ethnicity and religion, nationalism and spirituality, ethnic and national myths and ideologies, cultural and national memory, nationalism and everyday practise, ethnic boundaries, prejudices, stereotypes, inter-ethnic and national conflicts, multi-ethnicity.

## **General questions of the Hungarian cultural identity**

Which are the main characteristic differences between the Hungarians and the “others” from “Non-Hungarian” and “Hungarian” perspectives? What are the main components of the Hungarian cultural identity? Related to these questions we meet the ethnographical and cultural anthropological research of the Hungarian culture and identity.

## **Cultural identity and mythical-ritual memory**

What is the difference between the narrative and mythical memory? How is cultural memory expressed during rituals? How is identity constructed in cultural processes? We try to find the possibilities of these answers with the help of ethnological case studies. From these perspectives we analyse different historical, mythical, and ritual symbols.

## **National festivals and rituals**

Festivals and rituals are significant in the cultural practise of ethnic and national groups. The members of communities can “replay” and “relive” the time of their “ancestors” and ethnic-national “heroes” during the festivals and rituals. In the semester we interpret structures and performativity of the rituals and festivals.

## **Homes and lands**

One of the most important elements of the national identities is the belonging to the “Motherland” or “Fatherland”. Why can be a territory, a land so important for nations? What does “Motherland” or “Fatherland” mean in a national identity construction? The state of a nation or a “cultural territory” where “members of the cultural nation” live as citizens of different countries? In the context of this analysis, we can also look in more detail at the problem of cultural nationalism.

## **Is there a “character” of a nation?**

We examine the social psychological and anthropological terms of auto- and hetero-stereotypes, prejudices, and different ideologies about “national characters”. Thereafter, we also illustrate the analysed issue with examples of cultural identity:

Who are the “good members” of a nation and what “nature” should they have? What kinds of auto-stereotypes do exist in different ethnic and national ideologies? Who are national-historical heroes, actual role models and celebs?

With these questions we approach the question of national identity in art and popular culture as well.

## **“Relatives”, “friends”, and “enemies”**

Continuing the previous questions, we examine who are the “insiders” and “outsiders” in the constructions of national identities. Who are the members of the “in”- and “out-groups”? Which nations or groups are the “enemies” of each other’s and why? And who are their “relatives” and why?

## **Ethnicity and humour**

Does humour separate communities from each other with using stereotypes or does it ease tensions of inter-ethnic conflicts and trauma? This seemingly particular issue can give us a great opportunity to understand cultural “distances” and “proximities” created and recreated in ethnicity and nationalism.

## **Identities and subcultures in Eastern and Central Europe**

This topic attempts to show the multiple and multicultural identities in Eastern and Central Europe. With the help of case studies, we explore various Eastern and Central European ethno-cultural groups, religious, cultural, and sexual minorities, and subcultures.

## **Migration**

Processes of migration are inseparable from the problems of ethnicity and nationalism. In Eastern and Central Europe is equally important to analyse the groups that have migrated from our region and the people who have settled here.

Besides, we will also examine how Hungary's nationalist identity politics has reacted to the migration processes of recent years.

## **Summary of the semester**

The last lecture summarizes the questions and topics of the semester pointing out the shared points as well as the different, varied manifestations of ethnicity and nationalism in Eastern and Central Europe.

## **Reading list:**

Anderson, Benedict 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised edition. (London: Verso, 1991), Chapter 1 ‘Introduction’, Chapter 2 ‘Cultural Roots’ and Chapter 3 ‘The Origins of National Consciousness’, pp. 1-46.

<https://www2.bc.edu/marian-simion/th406/readings/0420anderson.pdf>

Assmann, Jan: *Collective Memory and Cultural Identity*.

[www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/Marcuse/classes/201/articles/95 Assmannpdf](http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/Marcuse/classes/201/articles/95%20Assmann.pdf)

Balogh, Balázs – Ilyés, Zoltán (ed.) 2006. *Perspective of Diaspora Existence. Hungarian Diasporas in the Carpathian Basin*. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó

Brubaker, Rogers, Mara Loveman and Stamatov, Peter 2004. "Ethnicity as Cognition", *Theory and Society*, Vol. 33, 2004, pp. 31-64.

[http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/brubaker/Publications/24\\_Ethnicity\\_as\\_Cognition.pdf](http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/brubaker/Publications/24_Ethnicity_as_Cognition.pdf)

Brubaker, Rogers – Feischmidt Margit – Fox, Jon – Grancea, Liana 2006. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*. Princeton, University Press

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. [www.academia.edu/2035904/Ethnicity-andNationalism-anthropological-perspectives](http://www.academia.edu/2035904/Ethnicity-andNationalism-anthropological-perspectives)

Gal, Susan-Kingman, Gail (eds.) 2000. *Reproducing Gender. Politics, Publics and Everyday Life after Socialism*. Princeton, Princeton University Press

Gellner, Ernest 1983. *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell), Chapter 1 'Definitions', Chapter 2 'Culture in Agrarian Society' and Chapter 3 'Industrial Society', pp. 1-38.

<http://gellnerpage.tripod.com/gellner11.html> (a iné zdroje na webe pre kap. 1 a 3)

Hall, Stuart: *The Question of Cultural Identity*. [www.georgetown.edu/faculty/irniven](http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/irniven)

Hobsbawm, Eric and Kertzer, David J. 1992. 'Ethnicity and Nationalism in Europe Today', *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 8, No. 1. (Feb., 1992), pp. 3-8.

<http://www.rationalites-contemporaines.paris-sorbonne.fr/IMG/pdf/Hobsbawm.pdf>

Hobsbawm, Eric and Ranger, Terence (eds.) 1983. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press. Introduction, pp. 1-14.

[http://faculty.washington.edu/ellingsn/Hobsbawm\\_Inventing\\_Traditions.pdf](http://faculty.washington.edu/ellingsn/Hobsbawm_Inventing_Traditions.pdf)

Hofer, Tamás – Sinkó Kalló, Katalin- Kisbán, Eszter 1994. *Hungarians between East and West*. Budapest, Néprajzi Múzeum

Kemény István: *The Gypsies/The Roma in Hungarian Society* [www.mek.oszk.hu/06000/06025/06025.pdf](http://www.mek.oszk.hu/06000/06025/06025.pdf)

Kuligowski, Waldemar-Richard, Papp (eds.) 2015. *Sterile and Isolated? An Anthropology Today in Hungary and Poland*. Poznań-Wielichowo 2015, "Poznańskie Studia Etnologiczne", tom 17, Wydawnictwo TIPI

Litovkina, Anna - Sollosy, Judit – Medgyes, Péter – Brzozowska, Dorota 2012. *Hungarian Humour*. Krakow, Tertium

Löfgren, Orvar: *The Nationalization of Culture*. [www.volksunde.uni-muenchen.de/vkeelofgren.pdf](http://www.volksunde.uni-muenchen.de/vkeelofgren.pdf)

Sik, Endre (ed.) 1995. *Refugees and Migrants: Hungary at a Crossroads*. Budapest, Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

Smith, Anthony D. 1999. *Myths and Memories of the Nation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Swatridge, Colin 2010. *A Country Full of Aliens. A Briton in Hungary*. Budapest, Corvina