**Thinking the Nation:**

**The Seduction of the West**

**Course Description:**

To most Americans, nationalism is an ugly word. It connotes something alien and excessive, a problem that happens to other countries, compared to the healthy patriotism of the United States. Yet from its birth in the late 1700s through most of its first century, nationalism was seen as a radical futuristic project of social change, a ‘revolutionary virus’ alongside liberalism, republicanism and later, socialism.

Using approaches from a variety of disciplines including history, philosophy, sociology, political theory, anthropology, and comparative literature, this course will examine the theoretical and historical dimensions of nationalism, from its emergence in Europe at the turn of the 18th century, its expansion and consolidation as the primary means of societal organization in the 19th century, and the twin problematic associated with its combustion at home (Europe) and exportation/adoption abroad (colonial world) during the 20th century.

In the first part of the course we will lay out the major theoretical formulations of nationalist thought over the last two centuries. In doing so, we will encounter a diverse set of methodological practices brought to the study of nationalism. In the second half of the course we will discuss a variety of issues that have come to problematize these formulations in recent years. We will look at how external categories such as race, gender and post-colonial identity have deconstructed the nation from without and examine how critiques internal to the study of nationalism have called attention to the existence of different nations within, across, and above the nation-state.

**Required Texts:**

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*

Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World*

Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*

Julia Kristeva, *Nations Without Nationalism*

**Part I. Mapping the Imagined Community**

Week One: **Introduction: The History and Study of National Thinking**

* Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, (pp. 1-79)

Week Two: **What is a Nation? What is the Relationship between Nations and Nationalism?**

* Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, (pp. 100-130)
* Ernest Renan – *Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?* “What is a nation?” (1882)

**Liberal and Ethnic Nationalisms**

* Guissepe Mazzini**:** “On Nationality” (1852)
* Victor Adler and [Georg Schönerer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg_Ritter_von_Sch%C3%B6nerer): “The Linz Program of 1882”
* Theodore Herzel: “On the Jewish State” (1896) (Chapters I,II)

Week Three: **The Golden Age of Thinking the Nation (I)**

* Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (1983)

Week Four: **The Golden Age of Thinking the Nation (II)**

* Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (1983)

**Part II. Whose Imagined Community?**

Week Five: **Colonialism and National Formation (I)**

* Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) (selections)

Week Six:

* **Midterm in Class Feb 24th**
* **Film:** Gillo Pontecorvo, *Burn!*

Week Seven: **Colonialism and National Formation (II)**

* Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) (The Culture of Resistance)
* Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments* (1991) (Intro, The Colonial State)

Week Eight: **The Allure and Abyss of Development**

* Ziya Gokalp , *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization* (1911) (selections)
* Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (1986) (Introduction; Chapters I, IV)

Week Nine: **Nations Without States: Or why the United Nations is really the United States**

* Antonio Gramsci, "On the National-Popular" (1944)
* Rebeeca Karl, *Staging the World.* (2005) (Introduction, Chapter I)

Week Ten: **The National Imagination and the Imaginary Nation (I)**

* Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans,*(1990) (selections)
* Stathis Gourgouris, *Dream Nation* (1996) (Chapter 1)

Week Eleven: **The National Imagination and the Imaginary Nation (II)**

* Slavoj Zizek, “Eastern Europe’s Republics of Gilead” in *New Left Review* (1991)
* **Film**: Emir Kustarika, *Underground*

Week Twelve: **Between Worlds (I) - Race and Nationalism**

* Frederick Douglass, "The Meaning of the Fourth of July for the Negro” (1852)
* W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk,* (1961) (Chapter One “Of Our Spiritual Strivings”)
* David Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry, 1780-1840*. (1993) (Intro; Chapters I, III)

Week Thirteen: **Between Worlds (II) – Gender and Nationalism**

* Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation* (1997)

## Julia Kristeva, [*Nations Without Nationalism*](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cup/catalog/data/978023108/9780231081047.HTM) (1993)

Week Fourteen: **Before a Nation, Without a Nation**

* Mahmoud Darwish, *Memory for Forgetfulness* (1982)
* Edward Said, *Reflections on Exile* (2000)