Hasn’t everything already been said about nationalism? It is hypertrophic group consciousness, or excessive patriotism, right? It is what mobilizes collectivities, from the ancient world to the modern. It is love of patrie, of nation, of king or republic, of constitution, native land, country, and people – n’est-ce pas? We see it working in Vercingetorix, in his revolt against Rome, as well as motivating Caesar and his legions, as they repressed the Gauls. It is alleged to be mixed up with modernization and development, but also with traditionalism and neo-traditionalism (or invented tradition). We presumably see evidence of it in the memoirs of politicians and writers, as in a vast variety of lieux de memoires. It is apparently what infects Al-Qaeda, Saddam, Arafat, Sharon, and George W. Bush. Nationalism is the water in which we fish swim, right? Not so fast.

This course, which will be thematic in structure, not narrative, will take a new approach to the old academic study of ‘nations and nationalism’. It will view ‘nation-talk’ as primarily a political – not an ethnic, socio-cultural, or ideological – phenomenon, and will engage it in a historically strict-constructionist perspective. That is to say, we will take actors’ discourse seriously: where contemporaries spoke of “the Republic,” “the State,” or “the king” – or even of le peuple or la patrie – we will not assume they meant “the nation”. Instead we shall try to ferret out the nuances and distinctions among these highly significant, if often contested, concepts.

Similarly, where contemporaries derogated “politics [la politique] and parties,” we shall not assume that they were prevaricating, but rather, we shall try to grasp the political meaning and effect (le politique) of ostensibly apolitical appeals – notably (not only) nation-talk. We shall seek to glimpse the specific style of a non-party organization (league, movement, front, etc.). We shall set aside the axiomatic French view that the State fashioned the Nation, and instead consider the opposite possibility: that nation-talk was an expression of opposition(s) to the State.

By and large, the course will focus on the development of nation-talk in French history, but in order to put this into relief, it will be useful to see it in comparison with nation-talk in Germany, Britain, and the United States.

At each class, the instructor will make a presentation, after which the students and he will discuss the reading of the day. Some of the reading will be primary source material (often in French), but much of it will consist of the work of historians and social scientists who have attempted to deal with these questions.

**Strongly suggested preliminary reading:**

And for those that need a sense of the narrative overview:
Furet, F. *La Révolution, de Turgot à Jules Ferry, 1770-1880* (1998)

**Course Outline**

Class 1: The French Model: An Overview
Class 2: The Anglo-American and German Models
Class 3: The Question of Nationality and Citizenship
Class 4: Patrice, Nation, État

Part II: Nation-Talk: The Escape from ‘Politics’. A New Approach

Class 5 & 6: The Crucial Nuance: ‘Le’ vs. ‘La’ Politique
Class 7: Fons et origo: eighteenth century oppositional nation-talk
Class 8: The coming of “le social” (the Socialist variant)
Class 9: The right-wing bids (neo-royalism, bonapartism, catholicism)
Class 10: Two later Republican Variants: Revanchism/Boulangism
Class 11: The Xenophobic & Antisemitic Variants
Class 12 & 13: Contemporary variants: Gaullism, Poujadism, Le Pen
Class 14: The Disappearance of Nation-Talk? (Eley, Brubaker)

Assignments:

Class 1 (French Model):
Renan, in Eley & Suny, 41-55
Barrès & Maurras in Girardet, 139-42
Scan either B. Jenkins’ book or S. Hoffmann’s Tanner lectures

Class 2: Colley, 320-375
Leah Greenfeld, chapter on England and U.S.
Fichte, in Girardet (118-119)
As much of first half of Guiomar (1991) as you can manage

Class 3:
P. Weil, 9-93
Sahlins, 11-16, 267-327

Class 4: Englund, review of David Bell;
Darriulat, 7-10, 100-126, 159-70, 233-281

Class 5 & 6: Schmidt
Rosanvallon;
Englund, ch. 1

Class 7: Koselleck, ch. 10
Cowans, 1-86
Guiomar (1991), as much of second half as you can manage

Class 8: Donzalet, 1-157 (read quickly)
Englund, chapter on socialist variant of nation-talk
Mosse article
For fun: Sternhell, first 50 pp.; Crapez: as much as you can stomach.

Class 9: Englund, chapter on the right after 1885
Jonas, 198-243
Muck around in Bonafoux-Verrax and Delmaire if you feel like it.

Class 10: Joly (« Revanche »), in C. Prochasson & Leclerc, Dictionnaire de la Republique
Englund, relevant chapters

Class 11: Kauffmann, pages to be made available
Cabéro, 219-250 (skim)
Jeismann, 151-258 (skim)
For fun, spend an hour apiece with Todorov and Winock.

Class 12 & 13: Serge Berstein, Gaullisme (Que sais-je?)
Stanley Hoffmann, Le poujadisme

Class 14: Flit briefly through Eley & Suny, part IV.
Ditto for Brubaker.

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Anderson, Benedict. Imagined Communities
Bell, David. The Cult of the Nation in France, 1750 to the Present (Camb., 2002)
Bonafoux-Verrax, C. A la Droite de Dieu.La Fédération nationale catholique, 1924-44
Cabéro, José. Nationalistes et étrangers
Chickering, R., We Men Who Feel Most German. A Cultural Study of the Pan-German League (1886-1914)
Colley, Linda. Britons: Forging the Nation
Crapez, Marc. La Gauche réactionnaire. Mythes de la plèbe et de la race dans le sillage des Lumières (Paris, 1997)
Crapez, Naissance de la gauche (Paris, 1998)
Darriulat, Ph. Les Patriotes, la Gauche républicaine et la nation, 1830-1870 (1995)
Delmaire, D. Antisémitisme & Catholiques. Dans le Nord pendant l’affaire Dreyfus
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Dornel, Laurent. La Fr. hostile: socio-hist. de la xénophobie, 1870-1914
Douyère-Demeulenaere, Ch. Séverine & Vallès, Le cri du peuple
Eley, Geoff and Ronald Grigor Suny. Becoming National
Englund, Steven. Nation-Talk: The Political Significance of the Idea of the ‘Nation’ in French History (a xeroxed selection)
(“The Ghost of Nation Past” (J. of Modern History and FP&S)
(Review of David Bell, forthcoming in RHMC)
Gauchet, Marcel. “L’Austère alliance du patriotisme et de la science” (in Lieux de Mémóires, vol. I)
Guiomar, Jean-Yves. La nation entre l’histoire et la raison (Paris, 1991)
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Hayward, Jack. After the French Revolution: Six Critics of Democracy and Nationalism (NYU Press, 1993)
Hobsbawn, Eric & J. Ranger. The Invention of Tradition
Hoffmann, Stanley. Poujadisme (1956)
Hoffmann, Stanley. Decline or Renewal? France Since the 1930s (New York, 1974)
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Jonas, Raymond. France & the Cult of the Sacred Heart (Berkeley, 2000)
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Pulzer, P. The Rise of Political Antisemitism in Ger. & Austria (Camb., MA, 1964)
Puyrême, G. Chauvin, le soldat laboureur: contrib. à l’étude des nat’lismes (1993)
Renan, Ernest. «What Is a Nation?», in Eley & Suny; above)
Sahlins, Peter. Unnaturally French, Foreign Citizens in the Ancien Regime and After
Schmidt, Carl. The Idea of the Political
Sternhell, Zeev. La droite révolutionnaire en France, 1885-1914
Todorov, Tzetan. On Human Diversity: Nationalism, Racism and Exoticism in French Thought (Cambridge, MA, 1992)
Weil, P. Qu'est-ce qu'un Français? Hist. de la nationalité française depuis la Révol.
Winock, M. Nationalisme, antisémitisme et fascisme en France (1990)