

European Cultures and Identities

Draft Syllabus July 2025

summerschool
UTRECHT



Universiteit Utrecht

Materials

Reading materials are provided by the Utrecht Summer School

Period

7 July – 18 July, 2025

Credits

4.0 ECTS + Certificate of Attendance

Faculty

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Utrecht Summer School

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Location of course

TBA – Utrecht, The Netherlands

Contents

Introduction and overview	4
Overview of Reading	6
Academic Programme	7
Assessments, Attendance and Grading	14
Online Education and statement on GenAI	15
Current Political Map of Europe	16

Introduction and overview

Welcome to the Utrecht Summer School and welcome to European Cultures & Identities. The aim of this course is to introduce you to Europe. This is a continent with many different countries that all maintain their own political systems, cultural traditions, and national identities. At the same time, since the second half of the twentieth century, a majority of the European countries have been engaged in a joint project aimed at economic and political integration. We will explore how this mix of particularism and unity has developed historically.

Summer Course Format

Lecturers from Utrecht University will introduce various European topics and case-studies in different educational formats: lectures, seminars, and excursions. The course can be divided into three general themes:

- 1) The idea of Europe
- 2) European Culture and Identity materialized
- 3) European Culture and Identity and the wider world

Within each theme there will be two or three lectures, accompanied by seminars, in which lecturers will address one of the following topics:

- The Idea of Europe (theme 1)
- Nationalism (theme 1)
- Heritage and Memory (theme 2)
- Art (theme 2)
- Transnationalism (theme 3)
- Imperialism (theme 3)

The summer course has an interactive and intensive character. Therefore, it is expected of students to participate actively during the seminars by partaking in discussions, asking questions and engaging in group work. During lectures they are expected to take notes. Additionally, individual preparation of the assigned readings and finalizing portfolio assignments are crucial for successfully passing the course.

Please note that the schedule of the course might change. You will receive a finalized and detailed schedule on the first day of the course.

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives of the course are:

1. To obtain a grounding in European Cultures and Identities on a conceptual level, and to think critically about these topics.
2. To learn to apply conceptual knowledge about European Cultures and Identities to understand cultural expressions and learn to think about the creation of cultures and identities on a deeper level.
3. To learn to apply this knowledge to case studies by practicing with writing assignments, a presentation, and an exam.

Assessment forms

The course will conclude with three assessments, covering all the lectures, seminars and reading materials:

Assessment one: portfolio

For the first assessment, you will hand in a portfolio consisting of the class assignments you have made during the summer school (deadline: Wednesday 15 July; 10% of your grade).

Assessment two: group presentation

For the second assessment, you will prepare a group presentation about one particular European state or nation, and discuss its relationship with the European Union and/or the concept of Europe at large. We will form groups in week 1 – presentations will be in week 2. You will be asked to relate your case study to the lectures, seminars, and reading materials, and you will be challenged to formulate your own argument accordingly (40% of your grade).

Assessment three: exam

The third assessment will take the form of an exam on the core themes of the course during which your knowledge acquisition of the material will be tested (50% of your grade).

Overview of Reading Material (additional literature TBA)

Main literature

1. Anderson, Benedict, 'Old Languages, New Models' (*Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, chapter 5, pages 67-82) (2006).
2. Buettner, Elizabeth, 'Europe and Its Entangled Colonial Pasts: Europeanizing the 'Imperial Turn'', (*Decolonizing Colonial Heritage: New Agendas, Actors and Practices in and beyond Europe*, pages 25-43) (2022).
3. Echternkamp, Jörg and Stefan Martens. 'The Meanings of the Second World War in Contemporary European History.' (*Experience and Memory: The Second World War in Europe*, pages 245-263) (2010).
4. Pagden, Anthony 'Europe. Conceptualizing a Continent' (*The Idea of Europe*, chapter 1, pages 33-54) (2013).
5. Patel, Kiran Klaus. 'An Emperor without Clothes? The Debate about Transnational History Twenty-Five Years On.' *Histoire @ Politique* 26, no. 4 (2015), pages 1-16.
6. Wintle, Michael. *Europa and the Bull, Europe, and European Studies : Visual Images as Historical Source Material* (2004), pages 5-36.

Academic Programme

7 July – 18 July 2025

Week 1

Monday 7 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
10:00-10:45 Location: TBA	<u>Opening remarks:</u> Frank Birkenholz	<i>Welcome and introduction to the course</i>
11:00-12:45f Location: TBA	<u>Lecture #1:</u> Frank Birkenholz	<i>European Cultures and Identities: The Idea of Europe</i> Readings: Anthony Pagden, 'Europe. Conceptualizing a Continent', <i>The Idea of Europe</i> (2013), chapter 1, pp. 33-54.

Tuesday 8 July 2025

Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
<p>10:45-12:30</p> <p>Location: TBA</p>	<p><u>Seminar #1:</u> Frank Birkenholz</p>	<p><i>Contextualizing European States and State formation</i></p> <p>Readings: Benedict Anderson, 'Old Languages, New Models', <i>Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism</i> (2006), chapter 5, pp. 67-82.</p> <p>In class assignment (no preparation needed): With the whole class together: analyse an early modern (c. 1500–1750) map of Europe and a modern map of Europe (c. 1780–1900).</p> <p>Portfolio work Write a 350-word text connecting the course material of today's lecture and seminar with our analysis of the maps.</p>
<p>12:45-14:30</p> <p>Location: TBA</p>	<p><u>Lecture #2:</u> TBA</p>	<p><i>European States, Nations and Nationalism</i></p> <p>Readings: TBA</p>

Wednesday 9 July 2025

Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
<p>10:45-12:30</p> <p>Location: TBA</p>	<p><u>Seminar #2:</u> Frank Birkenholz</p>	<p><i>Europe: Colonialism, imperialism and post-colonial history</i></p> <p>In class assignment: TBA</p> <p>Readings: Elizabeth Buettner, 'Europe and Its Entangled Colonial Pasts: Europeanizing the 'Imperial Turn'', (Decolonizing Colonial Heritage: New Agendas, Actors and Practices in and beyond Europe, Pages 25-43) (2022).</p>
<p>12:45-14:30</p> <p>Location: TBA</p>	<p><u>Lecture #3:</u> TBA</p>	<p><i>Diasporic Europe: Hearing the Past, 1900-2020)</i></p> <p>Readings: TBA</p>

Thursday 10 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
9:00-17:00 Gather at Janskerkhof square for Bus 09:00 Gather at bus for return 17:00	<u>Excursion #1:</u> Mauritshuis Den Haag	Provisional Programme: 9:00 bus departure from Janskerkhof 10:30-11:30 visit to the Mauritshuis 11:30-17:00 free time in Den Haag 17:00 return to Utrecht by bus In class assignment: TBA

Friday 11 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
10:45-12:30 Location TBA	<u>Seminar #3:</u> Frank Birkenholz	<i>Art and Visual Representations of Europe from Antiquity today - The Myth of Europe</i> In class assignment: TBA Readings: Wintle, Michael. Europa and the Bull, Europe, and European Studies : Visual Images as Historical Source Material (2004), pages 5-36.
	<u>Lecture #4</u> TBA	What is European about European Art? – by TBA (GKW Art historian) Readings TBA

Week 2

Monday 14 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
10:45-12:30 Location TBA	<u>Lecture #5:</u> Frank Birkenholz	<i>Unity in Diversity : studying the history of Europe from a transnational perspective</i> Readings: see below seminar 4
12:45-14:30 Location TBA	<u>Seminar #4:</u> Group 1: Frank Birkenholz	Readings: Patel, Kiran Klaus. "An emperor without clothes? The debate about Transnational History twenty-five years on." <i>Histoire@Politique</i> 26, no. 4 (2015): 1-16.

Tuesday 15 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
Excursion Janskerkhof square Bus 9:00-17:00	<u>Excursion #2:</u> Boerhaave Museum & <i>Lakenhal Museum in Leiden</i>	Provisional Programme 9:00 bus departure from Janskerkhof 11:00 Boerhaave Museum 14:30 <i>Lakenhal Museum (potentially)</i> 17:00 return to Utrecht In class assignment: The idea of Europe and museum

		collections : the national and the transnational (TBA)
Wednesday 16 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
10:45-12:30 Location TBA	<u>Lecture #6:</u> Frank Birkenholz/(Eastern Europe Scholar)	<i>Transnational European Heritage, Memory and Identity</i> Echternkamp, Jörg and Stefan Martens. "The meanings of the Second World War in Contemporary European History." In <i>Experience and memory: The Second World War in Europe</i> , edited by Jörg Echternkamp and Stefan Martens, pages 245-263. New York: Berghahn Books, 2010 Echternkamp
12:45-14:30 Location TBA	<u>Seminar #5:</u> Frank Birkenholz	Assessment 1: Group presentations (40%)

Thursday 17 July 2025		
Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
10:45-13:45 Location TBA	<u>Exam:</u> Frank Birkenholz	Assessment 2: Exam (50%)

Friday 18 July 2025

Time and location	Activity	Description and readings
11:30 UU Summer School Office Janskerkhof 30	<u>Handing in accommodation keys</u> Frank Birkenholz	Students that make use of the Utrecht Summer School accommodation option hand in their keys to the course coordinator. The course coordinator will hand in their keys to the USS desk.
16:00-18:00 Location Closing Remarks: TBA Location Drinks: Hofman (see right)	<u>Closing remarks:</u> Frank Birkenholz	Closing and concluding remarks on the summer school, presentation of certificates, and farewell drinks at café Hofman Location Hofman: Janskerkhof 17A, 3512BM Utrecht, The Netherlands

Assessments, Attendance and Grading

Assessments

There will be two assessments that both test your knowledge and challenge you to formulate your own argument based on the course matter:

1. Class assignments: 10%
2. Group presentation: 40%
3. Final exam: 50%

Both assessments will take place at the end of week 2 and you need an average grade of at least 5,5 to pass the course.

Attendance and Grading

Note that full attendance is expected in all lectures, seminar sessions, and excursions. Students who are absent beyond their fault (illness, accident, etc.) should submit a medical certificate to the course coordinator Frank Birkenholz as soon as possible. Make-up assignments are expected for all unexcused absences. Ten percentage points will be subtracted for all uncompensated absences. Students who fail more than two make-up assignments will be dropped from this course.

Your grades will be numerical grades according to the Dutch grading system. Dutch grades range from 0 (very bad) to 10 (excellent). At Utrecht University, a 5,5 is the lowest passing grade, though note that this might be different at other (Dutch) institutions. Also note that grade inflation has not affected the Dutch grading system as much as it has some American institutions. Grades of 9 and higher are rarely given, the most common grades are between 6 and 8. The Utrecht University student registration system (Osiris) that will produce your transcript will round off all grades to whole numerals for 5 and lower, and half numbers for 5.5 and higher. On course work and examinations, however, it is customary to receive a grade that has not been rounded off. Plusses and minuses are sometimes used, and count for one-fourth of a point, for instance: 8- = 7,75. Meaning of numerical grades:

9.00-10.00	Excellent
8.00-8.99	Very good
7.50-7.99	Good
7.00-7.49	Very satisfactory
6.50-6.99	Satisfactory
6.00-6.49	Sufficient
5.50-5.99	Acceptable; minimum pass
5.00-5.49	Insufficient; fail
4.00-4.99	Unsatisfactory
3.00-3.99	Very unsatisfactory

2.00-2.99	Bad
0.00-1.99	Very bad

Note that conversion of grades that you have received in the Netherlands to grades at your home institution is the responsibility of your home institution, not Utrecht University. This chart should be used as an indication; no rights can be drawn from it.

* Any case of plagiarism will be reported to the home institution and results in a course failure, meaning 1.00 as final grade for this course.

Online Education

You have received your Utrecht University login code (SOLIS-ID) from the Summer School administration. If this is not the case, send them an e-mail at summerschool@uu.nl or contact them by phone: +31 (0)302534400. You can use this login code to gain access to the digital teaching environment on Microsoft Teams and to the digital environment of the university library.

Statement on use of Generative AI / ChatGPT

The use of GenAI tools such as ChatGPT affects the achievement of the learning objectives you work on during the course. Based on this, the staff make choices about the use of such tools.

In view of the learning objectives of this course, the use of GenAI as a tool is ***not*** allowed.

If staff suspect that you have used GenAI for an assignment, other than as permitted by this course manual, they may invite you to explain your work, and its genesis, orally.

Current political map of Europe

