

## Interrogating the Intersection between Race, Ethnicity, and Nationhood

SPS-LAW 3<sup>rd</sup> term Workshop 9 June 2009, 9:00 - 19:00,  
Sala Belvedere, Schifanoia and Teatro, Badia

Organized by Rainer Bauböck (SPS) and Jaime Lluçh (Max Weber visiting fellow) in cooperation with Ruth Rubio Marin (LAW)

### Workshop theme and questions

Political identities are among the most normatively significant and politically meaningful dimensions of modern politics.

A political identity can be conceived as the collective label for a set of characteristics by which persons are recognized by political actors as members of a political group. There are many sources of such recognition, such as party affiliation, nation, race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, language, etc. All these possible sources, however, are only political identities when political actors treat them as such. "Political actors" and "political groups," in turn, can be defined as those people who determine how governing power will be created, distributed, exercised, and ended, in ways that partly decide, among other things, who gets what, when, and how. Individuals have multiple group memberships, and they usually possess more than one identity.

This Workshop proposes to focus on three closely related and interconnected forms of political identity: race, ethnicity, and nationhood. As recently noted: "Race, ethnicity, and nation are not things in the world but ways of seeing the world. They are ways of understanding and identifying oneself, making sense of one's problems and predicaments, identifying one's interests, and orienting one's action. They are ways of recognizing, identifying, and classifying other people, of construing sameness and difference, and of "coding" and making sense of their actions" (Brubaker, Loveman, and Stamatov 2004).

This Workshop aims to bring together political and social theorists, comparativists, and legal theorists to reflect on the intersection between race, ethnicity, and nationhood. In political theory, normative theorizing on ethnicity and nationhood has benefited from cross-fertilization, but very few attempts to theorize all three forms of identity have been successful. In comparative politics, there are a few examples of works that incorporate race and nationhood or ethnicity and nationhood, but there is a dearth of works that aim to present a synthetic perspective on the mechanisms underlying group identity. In law and comparative constitutionalism, the study of identity seems to be compartmentalized into those who focus on race and ethnicity (antidiscrimination law, bills of rights, equal protection clauses) and those who study the intricacies of constitutional design to accommodate ethnic and national groups, often with a territorial base.



This Workshop is premised on the idea that race, ethnicity, and nationhood are interconnected forms of political identity, and the time is ripe for bold, synthetic, and pan-identities perspectives in political and social theory, comparative politics, and legal theory. Thus, theorists should be interrogating the intersection between race, ethnicity, and nationhood and theorizing the commonalities and dissimilarities between these three fundamental forms of group identity.

This Workshop will encourage participants to theorize across cultures, across state borders, and across geographic areas, and to think about the preferences, behavior, cultural specificities, historical legacies, and institutional contexts of various types of racial, ethnic, and national groups.

We suggest a number of guiding questions for Workshop participants. What are the formal and informal rules that define group membership based on race, ethnicity, or nationalism? What are the constitutive norms that determine the putative characteristics of such groups? What are the social purposes and the goals pursued by members of groups formed on the basis of race, ethnicity, or nationhood? (Abdelal, Herrera, et al. 2006) Can legal theory resist the natural tendency (and the practical necessity) to compartmentalize, and instead theorize about the common challenges presented by the effort to design remedies and institutions to address claims made on the basis of race, ethnicity, or nationhood? What is the cognitive content of political identities based on race, ethnicity, or nationhood? In other words, what is the worldview or framework that allows group members to make sense of social, political, and economic conditions?

The content of a political identity is also relational to the extent that it is composed of comparisons and references to other collective identities from which it is distinguished. In-group identity creation generally leads to the devaluation of out-groups. What are the relational characteristics between groups that identify on the basis of race, ethnicity, and nationhood? Are race, ethnicity, and nationhood mutually exclusive and clearly distinguishable political identities? And in the case of persons that have multiple racial, ethnic, or national identities, or concentric identities of this sort, what factors explain which identity becomes politically salient at any given point in time and across contexts?

## **Workshop participation**

The workshop is open for participation to all EUI researchers, visitors, fellows and faculty. Please register with [Eva.Breivik@eui.eu](mailto:Eva.Breivik@eui.eu).



## Workshop Programme

9 June, Sala Belvedere, Schifanoia

Morning session: chair Ruth Rubio Marín

9:00 – 10:00 Jaime Lluçh: Unpacking Political Identity: Race, Ethnicity, Nationhood in United States

Discussant: Rogers Brubaker

10:00 – 11:00 Alex and Carol Dutton Stepick: Civic Social Capital, Context of Reception, and Leadership: Mediating the intersection between Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism

Discussant: Jean-Thomas Arrighi

11:00 – 11:30 coffee break

11:30 – 12:30 Costanza Hermanin: Ethnic monitoring in Italy. Incautious use of a promotional equality framework?

Discussant: Janine Silga

12:30 – 13:30 lunch break

Afternoon session: chair Rainer Bauböck

13:30 – 15:00

Dejan Stjepanovic: The Thin Line Between Regionalism and Nationalism: A Theoretical Contribution to the Debate on Race, Ethnicity and Nationhood

Lucas Lixinski: Constitutionalism and the Other: Multiculturalism and Indigeneity in Selected Latin American Countries

Discussant: Ruth Rubio-Marín

15:00 – 15:30 coffee break



15:30 – 17:00

Costica Dumbrava: Ethnic preferentialism in access to citizenship. The case of postcommunist Central and Eastern Europe

Can Aybek: Constructing Otherness within Public Policy-Making in Germany: the Operational Role of Indicators on Immigrants and their Integration at the Local Level

Discussant: Rainer Bauböck

17:30 – 19:00 EUDO lecture  
Teatro, Badia

**Rogers Brubaker:  
Transborder Nationhood and the Politics of Belonging in Germany and  
Korea**

Discussants: Rainer Bauböck, Ruth Rubio-Marín