



*National Identity Formation  
in Early Modern Europe*

# CALL FOR PAPERS

## THE ROOTS OF NATIONALISM

*National Identity Formation in Early Modern  
Europe, 1600 - 1815*

Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands  
22 - 23 January 2015

Did nations and nation states exist in the early modern period? In the field of nationalism studies, this question has created a rift between the so-called 'modernists', who regard the nation as a quintessentially modern political phenomenon, and the 'traditionalists', who believe that nations already began to take shape before the advent of modernity. While the modernist paradigm has been very dominant, it has been challenged in recent years by a growing number of case studies that situate the origins of nationalism and nationhood in earlier times. Furthermore, scholars from various disciplines, including anthropology, political history and literary studies, have tried to move beyond this historiographical dichotomy by introducing new approaches.

This conference seeks to address the representation of nationalism as an exclusively modern phenomenon, offering a platform for scholars to engage with early modern national identity formation from various European perspectives – especially in its cultural manifestations (literature, historiography, painting, etc.). We invite paper proposals that focus on the rise of early modern national thought, both from a methodological point of view as well as case studies that focus on the ways in which national identities were shaped in early modern Europe. However, this historiographical demarcation is to be taken in a broad sense: while this conference will mainly focus on the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the specific periods that were most significant for creating a sense of nationhood might prove to vary from nation to nation. The year 1815 will nevertheless mark a clear end point, for after the Congress of Vienna brought the Napoleonic Wars to a close, the 'Pax Europæa' heralded the beginning of a new era altogether.

We especially welcome contributions which attempt to conceptualise the role of war and peace as decisive forces in the development of national communities in early modern Europe. Suggestions for papers or panels are:

- Theoretical and methodological approaches to early modern national identity formation
- The roots of nationhood and nationalism

- War and peace cultures and the formation of national identities
- Interrelationships between national identities and religion
- Interrelationships between national identities and regionalism or Europeanism
- Cultural genres (history, literature, painting) and national identity formation
- National imagery, myths, canons and symbols
- Travel texts and national identity in early modern Europe
- Future directions in early modern studies on the rise of national thought

### PROPOSALS

Paper proposals (max 300 words) should reach the conference committee by 1 April 2014 by email: [nations@let.ru.nl](mailto:nations@let.ru.nl). The committee invites panels or proposals on any topic relevant to this conference's theme: the forging of national identities in early modern Europe between 1600 and 1815. Confirmed keynote speakers are: David Bell (Princeton University), Azar Gat (Tel Aviv University), Andrew Hadfield (University of Sussex) and Caspar Hirschi (Universität St. Gallen).

Conference website: <http://www.ru.nl/rootsofnationalism>

### ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The conference is organised by the members of the 'Proud to be Dutch: The Role of War and Propaganda Literature in the Shaping of an Early Modern Dutch Identity, 1648-1815' research project, which is funded by The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). This project is part of the Institute for Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies (HLCS) at Radboud University Nijmegen. Further information about the project: [www.proudtobedutch.org](http://www.proudtobedutch.org)

Committee:

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