

Introduction Volume 6

KAS SWERTS

NISE/University of Antwerp

As restrictions continue to impede modern social life, our attention has diverted to oft forgotten practices or leisure activities that might at one time in the past enthralled a large amount of people. One of these, one could argue, is chess. Given a massive impetus due to the popularity of the television series *The Queen's Gambit*, many people have once again taken up the time-weathered sport. As sales of chessboards, -computers, and strategy guides have skyrocketed, new players have been confronted with the complexity of the 'noble game', searching for ways to encapsulate and grasp its intricately sublime nature. Stepping into the fray of the game, the novice immediately understands that chess is comprised of two halves: the need for a long-term strategy, and simultaneously the necessity to always be prepared to adapt or alter course should one be confronted with an unexpected move.

The intricate interplay between strategy and fluidity seems a fitting allegory for the contributions in this volume, as they all address the difficulties concerning nations and national movements which on the one hand try to envision a long-term future for their territory, whilst on the other hand are confronted with constantly changing contexts and interests.

The contributions themselves stem from two different NISE-events: the first three articles derive from the 2015 NISE-workshop in Brussels titled *Reloading the Nation? Alternative concepts of sovereignty and*



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citizenship in national movements (1960-2014). The workshop focused on the way sub-national movements in Europe and elsewhere experienced a period of ‘reloading’ since the 1960s and asked how these new forms of sub-nationalism and their corresponding movements might have differed from their predecessors or remained unaltered.

The other two articles are from the 2019 NISE annual conference in Warsaw which focused on the pivotal year of 1919. The articles address how different nations and (diaspora) national movements acted during the aftermath of the First World War, as the debates on the redrawing of borders, territories, and empires (most notably in Eastern Europe) gave different nations and national movements new opportunities.

In addition to the articles, this volume again stresses NISE’s key tenet of connecting researchers with archival institutions that focus on (sub)national movements. The volume includes two contributions: one on the Welsh Political Archive, and one on Tresoar, the Frisian Historical and Literacy Centre. Moreover, next to the Archival Reviews, there are two articles from the State of Nationalism-project: a review of the connection between nationalism and gender, and one on the subject of ‘nation branding’. And finally, the volume includes a number of book reviews.

To return one more time to the chess metaphor: this year has been an unexpected move, forcing NISE and *Studies on national Movements* to adapt its moves. But we can happily say that even though we had to change or cancel certain events, we have acquired new knowledge – including maintaining a focus on digital events in the future – which will further enrich both NISE and *Studies on national Movements*. This includes both the upcoming NISE conference in Diksmuide (Belgium) in March, and the annual NISE conference which will take place in May.