

A contested borderline: Geopolitical rhetoric, political poetry and writings

Workshop to be held in Göttingen in October 2011
Organized by the Study Platform on Interlocking
Nationalisms

This workshop is the second meeting of what is proposed as a thematic research group on The Rhine as a cultural space in romantic nationalism - a more extensive outline on which is available from info@spinnet.eu

The conquest of the left border of the Rhine River by the French revolutionary armies and the following subjugation of the Rhineland and all German territories by Napoleon's armies provoked, after a first partially positive echo, increasingly hostile anti-French sentiments. German political poetry prepared and incited the anti-Napoleonic wars of liberation. Writers like Arndt and Görres defended the Rhine as Germany's artery whereas authors like Quinet, Musset, and Hugo complained the Rhine as the eastern border of France. This dispute culminated in the so-called Rhine Crisis of 1840 and after the war of 1870-71 when Alsace-Lorraine became the fatal bone of contention. But access to, and control over the Rhine was claimed by all its contiguous states.

A supranational-comparative analysis of the investment of the Rhine with both cultural and political meanings is proposed for this workshop which will combine some 12 selected papers over a 2 day period in Autumn 2011. The exact date and details of organisation will be indicated in the next circular (March 2011). As a venue, the University of Göttingen is being considered.

Paper proposals are herewith invited. A brief outline should be submitted to the SPIN office in Amsterdam before the end of March: info@spinnet.eu. Upon selection, the entire text (12-15 pp.) is to be submitted by 31 August 2011, so that a full reading dossier can be distributed to all participants in time for the Autumn meeting. The workshop sessions will involve a ten-minute précis of each paper presented by the author followed by 30 minutes discussion. Publication of the proceedings is envisaged.

A record of the previous first workshop on Romantic Rhine travel, held at Amsterdam in October 2010, is being made available on the website www.spinnet.eu (> Documents > Working papers). A third workshop "Restored future: castles and monuments on the Rhine and in the neighbouring countries" will take place at Bingen on the Rhine in Summer 2012.

The Study Platform of Interlocking Nationalisms (SPIN) is directed by Joep Leerssen, Professor of European Studies at the University of Amsterdam (leerssen@uva.nl). The coordination of the Rhine-theme group has been entrusted to Professor Manfred Beller, formerly of the Università di Bergamo (mhbeller@arcor.de, during the Winter-period in Italy: hansbeller@teletu.it).