Instructions: Choose three out of six questions below, answering one from each section. Be sure to discuss specific scholars and publications in your answers.

I General Historiography and Theory

1. Discuss the historical trajectory of studies on nationalism that began after the First World War up to the present by paying particular attention to the shift from an organicist to a modernist understanding. What are the core assumptions of both the organicist and the modernist paradigms, and how has the modernist interpretation critiqued and overturned the organicist assumptions?

2. Although the modernist interpretation of nationalism remains the dominant paradigm, it is far from uncontested. Indeed, it has been recurrently criticized, not only by primordialists, but also by the so-called perennialists as well as those who seek a more natural development from medieval proto-nations. Evaluate the modernist paradigm in light of these critiques and especially the work of Anthony Smith.

II Comparative

1. Imagine you are teaching a class on (early) modern European history frames by the Leitmotif of nationalism. How would you explain to your students the main rationale for your course, your definition of central concepts, especially the categories of nation and state. Which works (6-8) would you include as required readings?

2. Starting with Hans Kohn, theorists of nationalism have frequently taken recourse to an East-West dichotomy that emphasizes the pioneering qualities of the former through the foil of the latter’s backwardness, or directly in a categorization into civic/inclusive versus ethnic/exclusive nationalisms, imbued with positive or pejorative connotations. Through examples from European history discuss the applicability of such normative categories in a geopolitical framework.
III Area specific

1. Is China a nation, an empire, or a civilization? Please discuss the relevance or irrelevance of nationalism in understanding the history of modern China. Make sure you refer to the major scholarly works that bear on this question.

2. In the process of imagining the nationhood of China since the late Qing, what local and foreign ideas were mobilized to create a modern Chinese nation? To what extent did nationalism succeed in transforming China from an empire to a nation? Please discuss the different views on this question with reference to current scholarship.