

Department of Sociology & Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations (MER) Colloquium Lecture



“Geopolitical Legacies, Nationalism, and Anti-Immigrant Sentiment”

A lecture by Thomas Soehl

Friday, January 27th, 2023

11:00am-12:00pm

Social Science Centre 5220

This talk will present two papers from a research program that contributes to our understanding of the considerable cross-country variation in anti-immigrant sentiment. Whereas previous work has examined factors such as fluctuations in labor market conditions, changing composition of immigration streams, or the rise of populist parties, I will propose a macro-political argument: past geopolitical competition and war have shaped how national identities formed and in turn also contemporary attitudes toward newcomers. I will introduce a geopolitical threat scale and drawing on data from 33 European countries show a robust and substantively significant relationship between past geopolitical trauma and restrictionist attitudes towards immigrants. A follow-up analysis examines the role of popular understandings of nationhood as a central mediating variable. Building on recent advances in the measurement of popular nationalism and data from 43 countries around the world, I show that a turbulent geopolitical past decreases the prevalence of liberal nationalism (pride in institutions, inclusive boundaries) while increasing the prevalence of restrictive nationalism (less pride in institutions, exclusive boundaries).

RSVP to socevent@uwo.ca for more information about attending virtually

The Sociology Colloquium Series is brought to you by the Department of Sociology, MER and the Social Science Student Donation Fund, is open to the public, students and scholars of any discipline.



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