

Collective Action and Social Movements in the Modern and Contemporary Period (A006713)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 1) Dutch Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Vrints, Antoon LW03 lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

	crdts	offering
Bachelor of Arts in History	5	A
Linking Course Master of Arts in History	5	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in History	5	A
Elective Set History	5	A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

Social history, political history, collective action, protest, social movements

Position of the course

This in-depth course aims to familiarize students with the history of collective action from the eighteenth century to the present. In three different ways, the course deepens students' knowledge:

- It provides insight into the development of collective action in a long-term perspective since the eighteenth century.
- It offers insight into the various debates, perspectives and methods that characterize the historiography of collective action.
- It provides insight into the cross-fertilization between history and other human and social sciences in the field of collective action studies.

Contents

The course provides insight into the development of collective action since the eighteenth century. The focus is on the developments of the last three centuries because it is generally assumed that the patterns of collective action underwent a profound transformation under the influence of the intensification of a number of social processes such as urbanization, state and nation building, and marketization. Thus, a special type of collective action, the so-called social movement, saw the light of day in this period, a form of organization that plays a crucial role in the contemporary socio-political system. That modernization thesis is critically questioned in this course.

In addition, it offers insight into the various debates, perspectives and methods that characterize the historiography of collective action. The place of collective action in historiography is prominent, since from the breakthrough of social history in the 1950s with the British Marxist historians and the Annales collective action has been one of the main research interests of social historians. This social history interest is of course understandable: its study constitutes one of the main accesses to the aspirations and strategies of the proverbial 99% that have long been neglected in historiography. The course unit introduces students to that rich historiography.

Finally, the history of collective action has been greatly enriched by interdisciplinary perspectives and concepts, particularly from historical sociology

spurred by Charles Tilly and historical anthropology. This course unit has the ambition to also familiarize students with those inputs from those disciplines.

Initial competences

Having successfully completed the courses History of Early Modern Times, History of Modern and Contemporary Times. The competences envisaged therein, i.e. a good knowledge of history from the Early Modern period to today, may also have been acquired in another way.

Final competences

- 1 To have a ready knowledge of the historical conceptual framework and the most important historical facts and historical explanations.
- 2 Possess a frame of reference of the various historical periods.
- 3 Have basic knowledge of models from the social and historical sciences including sociology, philosophy, literary studies, law, political science, communication studies and economics.
- 4 Placing the results of historical research in the appropriate national and international historiographical context, assessing their value and using them.
- 5 Being able to interpret, evaluate and report on existing research (also in a language other than Dutch) and own initial research or draft research.
- 6 Being aware of the importance of scientific integrity.
- 7 Reflect critically on the role of the global perspective, the dynamics of processes and patterns in historical situations.
- 8 Approach a problem from multiple perspectives.
- 9 Be able to report in writing on pending scholarly discussions in historiography (also in a language other than Dutch), with an adequate critical apparatus and in a clearly structured, scholarly text, written in clear and academically correct language.
- 10 To assess social problems and contemporary views with the necessary critical sense and historical background.
- 11 Interpret contemporary developments from a historical-comparative perspective.
- 12 Demonstrate cultural sensitivity, respect for diversity and reflect on continuity and change in a long-term perspective.
- 13 To participate actively in group discussions (also in a language other than Dutch) and to be able to communicate with experts in a clearly structured oral presentation in clear and academically correct language.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Seminar, Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Lecture, independent work, online discussion group, tutorial

Study material

Type: Slides

Name: slides

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Type: Reader

Name: reader

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

References

Course content-related study coaching

During classes and through the online discussion group there is opportunity to ask questions; the tutor can be reached via e-mail; support via Ufora; feedback after

the exam.

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Oral assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Oral assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible

Extra information on the examination methods

Participation includes participation in discussions during class and pre-submitted questions regarding reading assignment. Students submit a question on the discussion forum weekly before class based on prepared reading material.

Calculation of the examination mark

Period-based evaluation counts for 80% and permanent evaluation counts for 20%. Failure to participate in the evaluation of one or more components or having less than 10/20 for one of the components, one can no longer pass the entire course unit ("subject"). If the average final score should still be a grade of ten or more out of twenty, this will be reduced to the highest unsuccessful grade (= 9).

Facilities for Working Students

1. Possibility of exemption from attendance
 2. No possibility of examination at other time
 3. Possibility of feedback by email, by phone, by appointment during office hours
- For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy