

NATIONALISM, MYTHS AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Dr. Taras Kuzio

tkuzio@gwu.edu

www.taraskuzio.net

The study of nationalism, historical myths and the re-writing of history, national identity and language are important components of the “triple transitions” underway in post-communist states. They also remain central to the identities and political cultures of the US and western European mature democracies. This course will examine the role of nationalism, national identity and historical myths within post-communist states and compare and contrast the role of nationalism and identity to that found in the USA and Western European nation-states.

Objectives

By the end of the research seminar, students should:

1. Understand how nationalism, identity and historical myths interact with the nation-state and political system.
2. Compare and contrast the role of nationalism, national identity and historical myths in post-communist, the US and Western European nation-states.

Seminar Information

The seminar will be a reading and discussion seminar. All students will be expected to have read the required readings each week and to attend class prepared to discuss them. All required readings will be available on Blackboard.

The instructor is Dr. Taras Kuzio, Visiting Professor, Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University.

WEEK 1. WESTERN NATIONALISM

Key Questions

1. What is ‘banal nationalism’? Is it the same as civic nationalism and patriotism?
2. Is there a distinction between ‘good’ and ‘bad nationalism’?
3. What is the difference between civic and ethnic nationalism?
4. Why are nation-states composed of civic and ethnic factors?

Required Reading

- Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995), Chapter 3 (‘Remembering Banal Nationalism’), pp.37-59.
- David Brown, ‘Are there good and bad nationalisms?’, *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.5, part 2 (April 1999), pp.281-302.
- Edward Rhodes, ‘The Imperial Logic of Bush’s Liberal Agenda’, *Survival*, vol.45, no.1 (Spring 2003), pp.131-154.
- ‘America and empire. Manifest destiny warmed up?’, *The Economist*, 14 August 2003.

WEEK 2. STATE AND INSTITUTION BUILDING

Key Questions

1. Do all post-communist states require state building during their transitions?
2. Why is state building an important facet of the triple transition?
3. Why was Ukraine one of the last CIS states to adopt a post-Soviet constitution?

Required Reading

- Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation. Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1996), chapter 19 (‘The Problems of “Stateness” and Transitions: The USSR and

- Russia'), pp. 366-400.
- Taras Kuzio, 'The Myth of the Civic State: A Critical Survey of Hans Kohn's Framework for Understanding Nationalism', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol.25, no.1 (January 2002), pp.20-39.
 - Taras Kuzio, 'Transition in Post-Communist States: Triple or Quadruple?', *Politics*, vol.21, no.3 (September 2001), pp.169-178.
 - Alexander J.Motyl, 'Structural Constraints and Starting Points: The Logic of Systematic Change in Ukraine and Russia', *Comparative Politics*, vol.29, no.4 (July 1997), pp.433-447.

WEEK 3. NATION BUILDING

Key Questions

1. Why is the national question still ignored by the 'transitology' literature?
2. Is civic or ethnic statehood the only choice open to post-communist states?
3. Why were nation-building policies prioritised over political and economic reform in Ukraine but not in Russia?
4. Compare and contrast nation building and policies towards national minorities in Ukraine and other CIS states.

Required Reading

- Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation. Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1996), chapter 2 ("Stateness", Nationalism, and Democratization'), pp. 16-37.
- Dominique Arel, 'The Census as a Plebiscite: Interpreting "Nationality" and "Language" in the 2001 Ukrainian Census', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol.18, no.3 (2002), pp.213-249.
- Vera Tolz, 'Forging the Nation: National Identity and Nation Building in Post-Communist Russia', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.50, no.6 (November 1998), pp.993-1022.

WEEK 4. HISTORICAL MYTHS AND HISTORY-WRITING

Key Questions

1. Are historical myths and legends common to all nation-states?
2. How is history teaching related to nation building?
3. In what way has history writing and myths changed in Ukraine in relation to what was promoted in the USSR?
4. How do Ukrainian and Russian interpretations of Ukrainian history differ? Are they diverging or merging in the post-Soviet era?

Required Reading

- Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), Chapter 10, "The Resurgence of Nationalism? Myth and Memory in the Renewal of Nations", pp.163-186 and pp.253-282.
- Taras Kuzio, 'History, Memory and Nation Building in the Post-Soviet Colonial Space', *Nationalities Papers*, vol.30, no.2 (June 2002), pp.241-264.
- Vera Tolz, 'Rethinking Russian-Ukrainian relations: a new trend in nation-building in post-communist Russia', *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.8, part 2 (April 2002), pp.235-253.
- Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine. State and Nation Building* (London: Routledge, 1998), chapter 9 ('History, Myths and Symbols'), pp.198-229.

WEEK 5. NATIONAL IDENTITY

Key Questions

1. Is national identity fixed or always changing and adapting?

2. Is there a link between national identity, political consciousness, efficacy and civil society in Ukraine and the CIS?
3. Is it correct to focus on language as the only defining characteristic of identity in Ukraine?
4. Did Ukraine and CIS states adopt a territorial or ethnic criteria for citizenship?

Required Reading

- Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin, 1991), chapter 2 ('The Ethnic Basis of National Identity'), pp.19-42.
- Taras Kuzio, 'National Identity and Democratic Transition in Post-Soviet Ukraine and Belarus: A Theoretical and Comparative Perspective', *East European Perspectives*, vol.4, nos. 15 and 16 (24 July and 7 August 2002).
- Vera Tolz, *Russia. Inventing the Nation* (London: Arnold and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), chapter 7 ('Ukraine in the Russian National Consciousness'), pp.209-34.

WEEK 6. POLITICAL COMMUNITY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Key Questions

1. Define the link between national identity and civil society.
2. How has this manifested in post-communist states after 1989?
3. What evidence was found of the link between national identity and civil society in Ukraine's Orange Revolution?
 - Margaret Canovan, *Nationhood and Political Theory*, chapter 7 ('Power from the people: nationhood and political community'), pp.68-143.
 - Philip G. Roeder, 'Peoples and States after 1989: The Political Costs of Incomplete Revolutions', *Slavic Review*, vol.58, no.4 (Winter 1999), pp.854-881.
 - 'Stephen Shulman, 'National Identity and Public Support for Political and Economic Reform in Ukraine', *Slavic Review*, Spring 2005.
 - Taras Kuzio, *State and Nation Building in Ukraine*, chapter 7 ('National Identity and Civil Society'), pp.144-166.

WEEK 7. LANGUAGE POLITICS

Key Questions

1. How would you describe Ukraine's policy on languages?
2. What is a 'nationalising' state and is Ukraine a 'nationalising state'?
3. Have linguistic demands manifested themselves during elections?
4. Do Ukrainians vote for parties with linguistic-cultural demands?

Required Reading

- Rogers Brubaker, 'National Minorities, Nationalizing States and External Homelands', *Daedalus*, vol.124, no.2 (Spring 1995), pp.107-132.
- Taras Kuzio, 'Nationalising States' or Nation Building: A Review of the Theoretical Literature and Empirical Evidence', *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.7, part 2 (April 2001), pp.135-154.
- Anna Fournier, 'Mapping Identities: Russian Resistance to Linguistic Ukrainianisation in Central and Eastern Ukraine', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.54, no.3 (May 2002), pp.415-33.

WEEK 8. GENDER AND NATIONALISM

Key Questions

1. Why are gender issues ignored in theories of nationalism?
2. What is the relationship between gender and nation building?
3. Compare and contrast gender issues in Ukraine and other post-communist states.
4. Have gender issues progressed in post-Soviet Ukraine?

Required Reading

- Sylvia Walby, 'Woman and Nation' in Gopal Balakrishnan ed., *Mapping the Nation* (London: Verso, 1996), pp. 235-254.
- Martha Bohachemsky-Chomiak, 'Women's Organizations in Independent Ukraine' in Sharon L. Wolchik, and Volodymyr Zvighyanich, *Ukraine. The Search for a National Identity* (Lanham, Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2000), pp.265-284.
- Tatiana Zhurzhenko, *Ukrainian Feminism(s): Between Nationalist Myth and Anti-Nationalist Critique*, IWM Working Paper no.4/2001 (Vienna: Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen, 2001). <http://www.univie.ac.at/iwm/p-iwmwp.htm#Zhurzhenko>

WEEK 9. REGIONALISM and CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS

Key Questions

1. Is regionalism a hindrance to the establishment of a liberal democracy or can this be overcome in multi-ethnic states through consociational arrangements?
2. Do regions matter in Ukraine or are they of secondary importance to other factors such as language?
3. How successful have state policies been in integrating Ukraine's regions?
4. How have centre-periphery relations developed in the last decade?

Required Reading

- James Hughes and Gwendolyn Sasse, 'Comparing Regional and Ethnic Conflicts in Post-Soviet Transition States' in James Hughes and Gwendolyn Sasse eds., *Ethnicity and Territory in the Former Soviet Union: Regions in Conflict* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), pp.1-35.
- Gwendolyn Sasse, 'The 'New Ukraine': A State of Regions' in James Hughes and Gwendolyn Sasse eds., *Ethnicity and Territory in the Former Soviet Union: Regions in Conflict* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), pp.69-100.
- Lowell W. Barrington and Erik S. Heron, 'One Ukraine or Many? Regionalism in Ukraine and Its Political Consequences', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.32, no.1 (March 2004), pp.53-86.

WEEK 10. INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICT

Key Questions

1. Can linguistic groups mobilise and is there evidence of linguistic groups mobilising in Ukraine and the former USSR?
2. Why have Western and Russian predictions of inter-ethnic conflict in Ukraine not occurred?
3. What are the roots of the weakness of separatism in Ukraine?
4. Why did separatism fail to break out in eastern Ukraine?

Required Reading

- George Schopflin, *Nations, Identity, Power* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), Chapter 18 ('Minorities under Communism') and Chapter 20 ('Minorities and Post-Communism: a Political and Sociological Analysis'), pp.241-252 and 277-297.
- Edwin Poppe, and Louk Hagendoorn, 'Types of Identification Among Russians in the 'Near Abroad'', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.53, no.1 (January 2001), pp.57-71.
- Lowell Barrington, 'Russian-speakers in Ukraine and Kazakhstan: 'Nationality,' 'Population,' or Neither?' *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol. 17, no. 2 (April-June 2001), pp. 129-158.
- Susan Stewart, 'Autonomy as a Mechanism for Conflict Regulation: The Case of Crimea', *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, vol.7, no.4 (Winter 2001), pp.113-141.

WEEK 11. DIASPORA NATIONALISMS

Key Questions

1. Why have Russian diaspora's in the former USSR failed to mobilise?
2. Why do Russians prefer to define themselves as part of a Russian-speaking minority and not as ethnic Russians?

3. Why is Russian ethnic nationalism weak throughout the former USSR?
4. What is behind separatist mobilisation in Moldova's Trans-Dniestr region?

Required Reading

- David G.Rowley, 'Imperial versus national discourse: the case of Russia', *Nations and Nationalism*, vol.6, no.1 (January 2000), pp.23-42.
- Anatol Lieven, 'The Weakness of Russian Nationalism', *Survival*, vol.41, no.2 (Summer 1999), pp.53-70.
- Taras Kuzio, 'Russians and Russophones in the Former USSR and Serbs in Yugoslavia: A Comparative Study of Passivity and Mobilisation', *RFERL East European Perspectives*, vol.5. nos.13,14,15 (25 June, 9 and 23 July 2003).

Week 12. CASE STUDY ONE: RUSSIAN NATIONALISM AND THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE USSR

Key Questions

1. Why did Sovietology ignore or belittle the nationality question in the USSR?
2. How did events in Ukraine and Russia unfold in the Gorbachev era?
3. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Ukrainian national movement?
4. What role did Leonid Kravchuk and Ukrainian national communists play in the disintegration of the USSR and Ukraine's drive to independence?

Required Reading

- Ronald G. Suny, *The Revenge of the Past. Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), Chapter 4 ('Nationalism and Nation-States: Gorbachev's Dilemmas'), pp.127-162.
- Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine. Perestroika to Independence, Second Edition* (London and New York: Macmillan and St.Martin's Press, 2000), chapter 2 ('Strengths and Weaknesses of the National Movement'), pp.18-63.
- Paul D'Anieri, Robert S.Kravchuk, and Taras Kuzio, *Politics and Society in Ukraine* (Boulder, CO. : Westview, 1999), chapter 1 ('The Demise of the Soviet Union and the Emergence of independent Ukraine'), pp.10-43.

WEEK 13. CASE STUDY TWO: UKRAINIAN NATIONALISM

Key Questions

1. How is nationalism articulated in post-communist states, such as Ukraine?
 2. What are the different types of nationalism in Ukraine?
 3. Is Ukrainian nationalism a 'minority' or a 'majority' faith?
- Anthony Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, chapter 6 ('Gastronomy or Geology? The Role of Nationalism in the Reconstruction of Nations'), pp.163-186.
 - T.Kuzio, *Ukraine: Perestroika to Independence* (London: Macmillan, 2000), chapter 1, ('Theories of Nationalism and the Soviet Ukrainian Context'), pp.1-17.
 - Taras Kuzio, 'Nationalism in Ukraine. Towards a New theoretical and Comparative Framework', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, vol.7, no.2 (June 2002), pp.133-162.

