

Vesalius College

POL342E

Nationalism & Ethnicity: Political Conflicts in Europe

Tommaso Chiamparino

Summer Semester 2009

Course Schedule

25th May – 10th July

Tue: 11-13

Wed: 11-13; 14-16

Thu: 16-18

Office hours and contact information

Office hours: Thursdays, 14:30-15:30

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Course Description

This course explores the relationship between nationalism, ethnicity and politics. In the first part of the course, the students will be familiarized with the contemporary theoretical debates in the study of nationalism. During this first part students will acquire the necessary analytical perspectives, concepts and tools for the investigation of the phenomenon in particular cases. We will cover the following topics:

- What are nationalism and ethnicity and how have they been studied?
- The origins of nations & national identity (primordialism vs. modernism, ethnosymbolism and other perspectives)
- Is there “good” and “bad” nationalism? (West vs. East, cultural vs. political, civic vs. ethnic; liberal vs. illiberal)
- The link between nationalism and democracy
- Ethnic mobilization: peace vs. violence
- What is beyond the nation-state? (federalism & consociationalism; cosmopolitanism; transnationalism)

The second part of the course will apply these theories and concepts in the analysis of several nationalist movements and ethnonationalist conflicts. The cases proposed for discussion are the following:

- Spain (Catalonia, Basque Country, Galicia)
- UK (Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales)
- Belgium (Flanders)
- France (Corsica)
- Former USSR (Georgia, Chechnya)
- Former Yugoslavia (Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo)

Prerequisite

There are no formal prerequisites, but students will find it helpful to have already taken at least one course in politics or history.

Objectives

By the end of this class students will be acquainted with:

- the main theoretical debates in the study of nationalism
- a series of cases of nationalist movements and conflicts based on ethnonationalist claims
- management of and solutions to ethnic conflicts

They should also be able to:

- identify and make good use of additional research sources on nationalism and ethnicity
- develop analytical criteria for comparison across cases
- develop theoretically and empirically grounded research on nationalist and ethnic conflicts and their political stakes and consequences

Teaching methods

The class is based on lectures, in-class discussions and student presentations. A number of guest-speakers with expertise on particular topics will also occasionally be invited. Students are expected to read the corresponding reading material for each class and to actively engage in class discussions.

Assignments

The assignments for this class are as follows:

- One oral presentation (counting for 10% of the final grade). Topics for the presentations will be agreed with the lecturer. A short synthesis of this presentation (or the powerpoint slides) will have to be submitted;
- One written assignment of around 3,000 words (counting for 40% of the final grade). Ideally, papers should focus on one empirical case and analyze it in relation

to one (or more) of the theoretical debates in the literature. The lecturer will offer guidance to the choice of the paper topic. The deadline for choosing a topic and discussing it with the lecturer is June 2nd. The paper itself will be due on July 3rd.

Assessment

Evaluation:

- Presence and participation in class: 10 %
- Oral presentation: 10%
- Paper: 40 %
- Final Exam: 40 %

Grades will be given both on a 0-20 scale and in a letter grade. The computation of the final grade will be based on the 0-20 scale (which gives a more accurate outcome). Conversion between the two systems of grading will follow the following table. Scores on the 0/20 grade will always be converted in the letter grade that approaches most closely the score.

Grade	Grade points	Score (./20)	Score (./20) rounded to nearest .5	Score (as a %)
A	4,00	17,00	17,0	85%
A-	3,67	16,22	16,0	81%
B+	3,33	15,44	15,5	77%
B	3,00	14,67	14,5	73%
B-	2,67	13,89	14,0	69%
C+	2,33	13,11	13,0	66%
C	2,00	12,33	12,5	62%
C-	1,67	11,56	11,5	58%
D+	1,33	10,78	11,0	54%
D	1,00	10,00	10,0	50%
F	0,00	7,67	Below 10	38%

Required reading

A complete reader with the texts to be discussed in class (see section below) will be made available on “Point Carré”.

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity. Students caught receiving or giving illicit aid during an examination will receive an “F” for the examination. Documented plagiarism of a paper will be given a “D” in instances of one or two sentences, and an “F” in more severe cases, and no revision will be allowed in either instance. Following the College policy, cheating and plagiarism cases will be communicated in writing to the Associate Dean for Students and submitted to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action.

Course outline

Week 1: 25-29 May

Topics

#1: Nations, ethnicity & nationalism

#2: Theories of nationalism: primordialism, modernism, ethnosymbolism

Read:

Barrington, Lowell (1997) “«Nation» and «Nationalism»: The Misuse of Key Concepts in Political Science, PS: Political Science & Politics, December Issue, pp. 712-716

Eriksen, Thomas (2005) “Ethnicity and Nationalism”, in Spencer, Philip and Howard Wollman (eds) *Nations and Nationalism: A Reader*, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, pp. 1-19

Özirimli, Umut (2000) “Primordialism” (ch. 3), in *Theories of Nationalism*, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave, pp. 64-74

Gellner, Ernest (1994) “Nationalism and Modernization”, in Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (eds.) *Nationalism*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 55-63

Anderson, Benedict (1991), “The Origins of National Consciousness” in *Imagined Communities*, London: Verso, pp. 37-46

Smith, Anthony (1994) “The Origins of Nations”, in Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (eds.) *Nationalism*, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 147-154

Week 2: 1-5 June

Topics:

#1 “Good” and “bad” nationalism (guest-lecturer Pieter-Jan de Vlieger, VUB)

#2 Is nationalism endemic to democracy?

#3 Multicultural societies and minority rights

#4 The logic of self-determination & secession

Read:

Brown, David (1999) “Are there good and bad nationalisms?”, *Nations and Nationalism* 5, no. 2, pp. 281-302

Spencer, Philip and Howard Wollman (2002) “Nationalism and Democracy” in *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi: Sage, pp. 121-156

- Kymlicka, Will (2002) "Multiculturalism and Minority Rights: West and East", *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe*, Issue 4, pp. 1-26
- Buchanan, Allen (1994) "Democracy and Secession", in Moore, Margaret (ed.) *National Self-Determination and Secession*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.14-33

Week 3: 8-12 June

Topics:

- #1 Violence & war**
- #2 Institutional solutions for divided nations**
- #3 Beyond nationalism and the nation-state**
- #4 Summing up & revision for exam**

Read:

- Van Evera, Stephen (1994) "Hypotheses on Nationalism and War", in *International Security*, 18:4, pp. 5-39
- (Hechter, Michael (1995) "Explaining nationalist violence." *Nations and Nationalism* 1:1, pp. 53-68)
- (Lijphart, Arend (1985) "Non-Majoritarian Democracy: A Comparison of Federal and Consociational Theories", in *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 15(2), pp. 3-15)
- Horowitz, Donald L. (2002) "Constitutional design; proposals versus processes", in A. Reynolds, *The architecture of democracy. Constitutional design, conflict management, and democracy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 15-36.
- Risse, Thomas (2002) "Nationalism and Collective Identities: Europe versus the Nation-State?" in Heywood, Paul, Erik Jones and Martin Rhodes (eds.), *Developments in West European Politics*, 2nd edition, Houndmills & New York: Palgrave, pp. 77-93

Week 4: 15-19 June

Presentations / case studies / guest lectures (to be determined)

Week 5: 22-26 June

Presentations / case studies / guest lectures (to be determined)

Week 6: 29 June – 3 July

Presentations / case studies / guest lectures (to be determined)

Week 7: 6-10 July

Exam