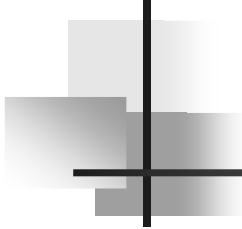




Lecture 5

Nationalism



What is the difference between ethny and nation?

- nation is a self-defined rather than other-defined grouping; nation is a self-aware, self-defined ethnic group
- **ethnies** are cultural communities much older than nations, on which nations are based
- difference between ethnies and nations is that **nations** have a delimited territory, a unified legal and economic system, and a public culture, but ethnies lack those elements (A. D. Smith)
- it is the political element that sets the two apart



Nation

- originally it was used for people who were born in the same place; Latin origin, *natio* (from *nasci* to be born), conveying idea of common blood ties (but the Romans never designated themselves as a *natio*, the term was reserved for 'community of foreigners')
- the word 'nation' in wide use from the 18th century
- in contrast, the word 'nationalism' much more recent



What is the nation?

- Objective definitions:

- language, ethnicity, religion, territory, common history, shared descent (ancestry, kinship), common culture, etc.
- for example: "a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture" (Stalin)

- Subjective definitions:

- solidarity, self-awareness, loyalty, collective will, etc.
- for example: "a soul, a spiritual principle" (E. Renan) or
- "a community of sentiment which would adequately manifest itself in a state of its own" (M. Weber) or
- "a group of people who believe they are ancestrally related" (W. Connor) or
- "a relatively large group of genetically unrelated people with high solidarity" (M. Hechter) etc.



What is the nation?

- "... when analysing sociopolitical situations, what ultimately matters is not *what is* but *what people believe is*. And a subconscious belief in the group's separate origin and evolution is an important ingredient of national psychology" (Walker Connor)



What is the nation?

- every attempt to answer this unresolved question depends on the belief that nations are real entities
- “Everyone agrees that nations are historically formed constructs.” (Brubaker)
- in contemporary writings nation is no longer regarded as unchanging and primary social entity

Are nations ancient or modern?

- the **modernists** see the nation as a purely modern phenomenon; it is a product of capitalism or industrialism and bureaucracy, an outcome of modernisation – *nationalism comes before nations*
- example: nation “belongs exclusively to a particular, and historically recent, period. It is a social entity only insofar as it relates to a certain kind of modern territorial state, the ‘nation-state’, and it is pointless to discuss nation and nationality except insofar as both relate to it” (Hobsbawm)
- in opposition, the **primordialists** see nations as ‘forever there’ entities that have existed for centuries, if not for ever – *nations come before nationalism*



Are nations ancient or modern?

- somewhere in between stands the position of the **ethnicists**
- they believe the modernists put too much emphasis on the modernity: they exaggerate the impact of industrialism, capitalism, bureaucracy on the modern state and nationalism
- the modernists fail to acknowledge the deep roots that nations have in ethnies, they do not see the earlier ethno-symbolic base of modern nations



What is the nation?

- civic and ethnic definitions of nation:
- civic nationhood derives from free will and participation in the nation; ethnic nationhood is tied to culture, ethnicity, and based on shared territory or language, or common descent etc.
- *Volksnation* as relating to myths of common origin
- *Kulturnation* as elevating the myth of common culture (*narod*)
- *Staatsnation* as based on citizenship (*nacija*)



Some definitions:

- “a nation is an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (Benedict Anderson)
- Miroslav Hroch is convinced that nations are real (note: not eternal) and should be defined as including: remembered common past of the group, linguistic or cultural ties enabling social communication within the group, perceived equality of all who belong to the group
- Gellner decided to omit definition of the nation; “nations can be defined only in terms of the age of nationalism”



Nationalism and 'nation-state'

- Giddens: a nation “only exists when a state has a unified administrative reach over the territory over which its sovereignty is claimed”
- the ideas of 'nation' and 'state' have been so successfully merged that we usually treat them as synonymous – this is not right!
- the term 'nation-state' implies that the cultural and the political correspond; that the 'people' who are ruled by the institutions of the state are culturally (ethnically) homogeneous – when in fact:
- only nations which have their own state can be described as 'nation-states' and the reality is that these are very few



Nationalism

- “a principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent” (Gellner) – also Hobsbawm, Breuilly...
- “nationalism is, above all, political” (Hechter)
- “nationalism is a political doctrine” (Breuilly)
- nationalist doctrine has 3 main claims:
nations are distinct and unique, loyalty to the nation is more important than other interests and values, the nation should have its own state



Nationalism

- nationalism is above all a social and political movement; sociological view should not reduce nationalism only to politics
- Billig: 'banal nationalism' – everyday affirmation and perpetuation of national identity (cf. Bourdieu's 'habitus', a set of social arrangements which have been internalised)
- one can understand nationalism as an organising political principle that requires national homogenisation and gives absolute priority to national values and 'interests' in aiming to achieve 'national goals'

Is nationalism about culture or politics?

- Hutchinson proposes the distinction between **cultural** and **political** nationalism
- cultural (also ethnic, Eastern) vs. political (also civic, Western) nationalism
- “Nationalism is not about culture or politics, it is about both. It involves the ‘culturalization’ of politics and the ‘politicization’ of culture.” (Özkırımlı)



Theories of nationalism

- most scholars agree that nationalism is a modern phenomenon
- the modern study of nationalism began with Ernest Gellner in the mid-1960s
- nationalism has survived and it prospers
- a new variant of nationalism emerged in the final quarter of the 20th century:
- neo-nationalism & post-communist nationalism



Next week's readings:

- We will talk about the post-1989 break-up of multinational states and about post-communism: think about the relationship between communism and nationalism and prepare a case-study example (e.g. Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia...)
- Holmes, Leslie (1997): *Post-communism: An Introduction*. Polity Press, Cambridge
- Frentzel-Zagorska, Janina (ed.) (1993): *From a One-Party State to Democracy: Transition in Eastern Europe*. Rodopi, Amsterdam