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.

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**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**


**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**

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

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

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**

**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?

**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**

**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**


**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**


**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**


**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**

**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**

**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.