Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict
SIPA, Columbia University
Summer 2012

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When: Mon and Wed 9:00-12:10
Office Hours: Monday 12-1

Introduction:

Nationalism was a common cause of conflict in international politics of past two centuries. Yet, the intensification and the vengeful resurgence of nationalist conflicts in the post-Cold War era have been most unexpected and surprising for policy-makers and scholars alike. The increasing frequency and deadliness of nationalist conflict at the international and the intra-state level, from mass expulsions to state-sponsored genocide, has prompted international and humanitarian interventions that have challenged time-honored norms of state behavior and its integrity. However, despite widespread recognition amongst intellectuals and policymakers of the virulent resurgence of nationalism, there is a widespread lack of consensus on the meaning and origins of, as well as the management strategies for dealing with, nationalist conflict. To many, nationalism appears just an amorphous and protean form of organization that is difficult to be defined, described and controlled.

Most of the literature for this course will be drawn from the contemporary debates on nation and international relations theory and practice, intentionally fusing together theory and case studies. However, while emphasis will be placed on achieving a better understanding of theoretical interpretations and frameworks for action, we will take good care to examine a number of case studies in a variety of contexts. This will familiarize us with the repertoire of strategies, justifications, and practices used by all actors. We will do so through assigned readings, but also by following events and conflict that unfold during this semester.

Requirements:

The major requirement is to write three take home papers no longer than 1500 words each. In addition, you are required to participate actively in class discussions. The third requirement is to make a presentation of the assigned readings for one class.

Grading:
Midterms: 75%
Participation: 10%
Presentation: 15%

Readings:

There are several books and a set of articles that for your convenience is placed in the reserve. Most books are very slim and they make a wonderful read. Most articles are available online.
Books:


1: What is a Nation? What is an Ethnic group?

Walker Connor, "A Nation is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group is a...," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Volume 1, Number 4, October 1978: 377-397.
Russell Hardin, One for All, pp. 3-17 and 46-106.

Week 2: Nationalism, Modernization and the State.


The First Assignment.

Week 3: Cultural and Ethnic Origins of Nations?


Week 4: Changing Identities?

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 1-111

**The Second Assignment.**

**Week 5: Nationalist and Ethnic Conflict**

Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence*, Norton: 1999


**Week 6: Ethnic Nationalism in World Politics: An Endemic Problem?**


Ian Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam*, pp. 1-35

**The Third and Final Assignment.**