

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT
Fall 2005

GOV 387: Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict

Instructor: Arman Grigorian

MW 8:30-9:50

Class Location: PAC 421

Office: PAC 220

Office Hours: MW 10:30-11:30 or by appointment

Course Description: This is an upper level course focused on the theoretical debates regarding the causes of what has come to be known in popular discourse as “ethnic conflict.” Why and when do such conflicts flare up? Are they fundamentally different in character from interstate conflicts? Why do some ethnic groups live in peace while others fight? Why do the same ethnic groups fight sometimes and live in peace at other times? Can third parties help or exacerbate such conflicts? Are there measures that can be taken to minimize the likelihood of such conflicts? These are only some of the questions that inform and organize the theoretical content of the course. We will also cover some basic material on the origins of nationalism, which is a subject intimately related to ethnic conflicts, as well as a set of empirical cases. The principle that has guided the selection of the empirical material, which with the exception of Rwanda deals with the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, has no hidden or sinister agenda other than my own empirical interests and knowledge.

The course has two basic missions. First, and quite obviously, it is intended to familiarize the students with the current thinking on nationalism and ethnonationalist conflict. Second, and less obviously but no less importantly, it is intended to demonstrate the value of theoretical and analytical approaches to politics and violence, which should be contrasted on the one hand with the radically skeptical and sadly common attitude that theories only “work” in physics, and on the other hand with the purely “humanistic” or normative approaches that bracket, ignore, or otherwise consider any causal analysis of political violence inappropriate. This, of course, does not mean that normative or methodological questions cannot be raised during the course. I will raise many such questions myself. It does mean, however, that the course will have a strong positivistic flavor.

Prerequisite: GOV155 or instructor’s permission.

Format: The class meetings will be organized as seminar discussions. This means that the students should read the assigned material in advance, be prepared to answer questions about it, and in general be prepared to participate in the discussion actively.

Requirements: Students will be required to attend all class meetings and read all of the assigned material. Anybody with two or more unexcused absences will be assigned a

failing grade for class participation. In addition there will be four written assignments – two in-class examinations and two 5-7 page take-home essays. The grades will be weighted as follows:

In-class exams: 20% each.

Mid-term essay: 20%.

Final essay: 30%.

Class participation: 10%.

No incompletes will be assigned, and no make-up exams will be given except in cases of certified medical or family emergencies. Late essays will be penalized at the rate of one letter grade a day (i.e. B+ to B).

The following books will be available for purchase at the bookstore:

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, UK: Verso, 1983).

Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983).

Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Stuart J. Kaufman, *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001).

Alan J. Kuperman, *The Limits of Humanitarian Intervention: Genocide in Rwanda* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2001),

Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Samantha Power, *"A Problem from Hell:" America and the Age of Genocide* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2002).

Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton and Co., 2000).

Ronald Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993).

Susan Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1995).

These books, as well as all other assignments will also be available on reserve. Note also that you have the option of buying these books on amazon.com.

Sept. 7 - Introduction: Why Study Nationalism and Ethnonationalist Conflict?

- Ted Robert Gurr, *Peoples Versus States*, pp. 3-21.
- Charles Kupchan, "Introduction: Nationalism Resurgent," in Charles Kupchan, ed., *Nationalism and Nationalities in the New Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995).

Sept. 12 – Defining Terms: Ethnicity, Nation, Nationalism, State.

- Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1994), ch. 4.
- Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, ch. 1.
- Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, ch. 1.
- Hechter, *Containing Nationalism*, ch.1.

Sept. 14, 19, 21 – The Origins of Nationalism.

- Clifford Geertz, "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States," in Clifford Geertz ed., *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa* (New York, NY: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), pp. 104-128.
- Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, chs. 2-3.
- Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, chs. 2-4.
- Hechter, *Containing Nationalism*, chs. 2-3

Sept. 26, 28 - Varieties of Nationalism:

- Hechter, *Containing Nationalism*, chs. 4-5.
- Snyder, *From Voting to Violence*, pp. 69-80.
- Anatol Lieven, *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism* (London, UK: HarperCollins, 2004), ch.1.
- Michael Mann, *Fascists* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 1-17.

Oct. 3, 5 - Democracy, Nationalism, and Conflict.

- Markus Fischer, "Culture and Foreign Politics," in Brenda Shaffer ed., *Limits of Culture: Islam and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).
- Snyder, *From Voting to Violence*, pp. 45-69.
- Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy*, chs. 1, 3-4.

Oct. 10 – Mid-term Exam

Oct. 19 - Demography and Ethnic Conflict. (First essay assignment handed out)

- Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," in Michael Brown, ed., *Ethnic Conflict and International Security* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 103-124.
- Alicia Levine, "Political Accommodation and the Prevention of Secessionist Violence," in Michael Brown ed., *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 311-340.

**Oct. 24 – Incomplete Information, Fear of Opportunism, and Ethnic Conflict
(Essays due back at the beginning of class)**

- James Fearon and David Laitin, “Explaining Interethnic Cooperation” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 90, no. 4 (December, 1996), pp. 715-735. Available on JSTOR
- Rui de Figueiredo and Barry Weingast, “The Rationality of Fear: Political Opportunism and Ethnic Conflict,” in Barbara Walter and Jack Snyder, eds., *Civil Wars, Insecurity, and Intervention* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 261-302.

Oct. 26 – Fear of the Future and Ethnic Conflict.

- James Fearon, “Commitment Problems and the Spread of Ethnic Conflict.” in David Lake and Donald Rothchild, eds., *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 107-126.
- Monica Duffy Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 26-29.
- Barbara Walter, “Government Responses to Self-Determination Movements,” *American Political Science Review* (forthcoming).

Oct. 31 – Ethnic Identity and Ethnic Conflict.

- Bedreddin Arfi, “Ethnic Fear: The Social Construction of Insecurity” *Security Studies*, Vol. 8, no. 1 (Autumn 1998), pp. 151-203.
- Kaufman, *Modern Hatreds*, ch. 2.
- James Fearon and David Laitin, “Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity,” *International Organization*, Vol. 54, no. 4 (Autumn 2000), pp. 845-877. Available on JSTOR

Nov. 2. – Nationalism and the Disintegration of the Soviet Union.

- Suny, *Revenge of the Past*, chs. 2-4.

Nov. 7, 9 – The Nagorno-Karabagh Conflict.

- Thomas de Waal, *Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2004), ch. 9.
- Kaufman, *Modern Hatreds*, ch.3.
- Snyder, *From Voting to Violence*, pp. 189-204, and 220-232.
- Erik Malander, “The Nagorno-Karabagh Conflict Revisited: Was the War Inevitable?” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vo. 3, no. 2 (Spring 2001), pp. 48-75.

Nov. 14, 16 - Nationalism and the Disintegration of Yugoslavia.

- Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, chs. 2-4.
- Kaufman, *Modern Hatreds*, ch. 6.
- Snyder, *From Voting to Violence*, pp. 204-220.

Nov. 21 - Third-Parties and the Conflicts in Yugoslavia.

- Samantha Power, *"A Problem from Hell,"* chs. 9, 12.
- Alan J. Kuperman, "Suicidal Rebellions and the Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention," *Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 4, no. 2, (June 2005), pp. 149-173.
- Arman Grigorian, "Third-Party Intervention and Escalation in Kosovo: Does Moral Hazard Explain It?" *Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 4, no. 2, (June 2005), pp. 195-213.

Nov. 28 – Rwanda: Why Did It Happen, and Why Did Nobody Do Anything to Stop It?

- Samantha Power, *"A Problem from Hell,"* ch 10.
- Alan J. Kuperman, *The Limits of Humanitarian Intervention*, chs. 2-3, 8.

Nov 30, Dec. 5 – Is There a Solution? (Final essay assignment handed out on Dec. 5)

- Arendt Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy" *World Politics*, Vol. 21, no. 2 (January, 1969), pp. 207-225. Available on JSTOR
- Brian Barry, "Political Accommodation and Consociational Democracy," *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 5, no. 4 (October, 1975), pp. 477-505. Available on JSROR
- Chaim Kaufmann, "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Conflict" *International Security*, Vol. 20, no. 4 (Spring, 1996), pp. 136-175. Available on JSTOR
- Radha Kumar, "The Troubled History of Partition," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 76, no. 1 (January/February 1997), pp. 22-34.

Dec. 12: Wrap-up (Essays due back at the beginning of class).

Final exam date TBA.