*DRAFT SYLLABUS*
GOV 94NS: Nation and Nationalism

Course Overview and Contact Information

**Course Overview**
- Semester and Year: Fall 2022
- Day/Time: Tuesdays 3-5:45pm
- CGIS Knafel Center K450
- Email: depstein@g.harvard.edu (I will normally respond to messages within 24 hours, M-F)

**Instructor Contact Information**
- Name: Prof Daniel J. Epstein
- Office Hours: Tuesdays 10am-12pm
- CGIS South 310

Course Description and Learning Objectives

Nationalism is a powerful force whose importance is only growing. This course addresses the concept of nation, how it holds legitimacy over peoples, and the origins of nationalism as an intellectual project and ideology in early liberal ideas, as well as more recent illiberal manifestations, including in the United States. Case studies consider the possibility of benign nationalism, imperial nationalism, post-colonial nationalism, and the curious case of evolving national identity in America with its political ramifications. Case studies cover the Central and Eastern Europe, post-colonial cases in Asia and Africa, and finally the politics of national identity in the United States. Our studies will emphasize the contemporary contours of nation and nationality, with a secondary focus on the history of these cases, insofar as it informs the sense of national identity and who “we” are, for any given nation. The semiotic concept of “myth” will be key, especially when addressing the US case, and we’ll engage with film and novels in addition to traditional academic reading.

Learning Objectives—with successful completion of this course students should be able to:
- identify the basic aspects of national identity, how it is formed and reproduced, and the role of history in the conception of the nation.
- describe and use the historical and semiotic concept of “myth,” and distinguish it from the commonly used definition of “myth” as merely false stories or ancient folktales.
- interpret the roles of particular myths in the construction of particular nations.
- critically look, listen for, see, hear, and decode language and symbols around them in everyday life that contribute to the development and reinforcement of national identity.
- compare different nationalisms across world regions.
- explain the role of particular national-historical and world-historical events in the construction of national identity.

Note: Updates/Changes may be made after this current version (August 9th). Be sure to check your course Canvas page for the newest updated syllabus, in case of changes.

Course Materials

**Course Materials:** Five books will required and should be available for purchase:
• John le Carré, *The Mission Song* (New York: Little, Brown, 2006) **Note:** any edition ok

You can use this link to purchase these materials at the Harvard Coop:

[LINK TBA]

These should also be on reserve in the library. All other course readings will be provided through links to the Harvard University library online services, or via .pdf files available on the Canvas course webpage.

**Additionally,** we will be viewing **two films** for this course:

• *Kolya*, directed by Jan Svěrák (1996)
• *When We Were Kings*, directed by Leon Gast (1996)

Provision will be made to watch the films together as a class in the evening (attendance this is required). Dates & Times TBA

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### Grading

(All course assignment deadlines are by default at 5:00pm on the due-date noted, **not at midnight**. Papers should be turned in via Canvas, in Word or GoogleDoc format. **Late Work** may be accepted without penalty if permission is sought at least 24-hours prior to the **deadline**. Otherwise, a penalty will be assessed of 20% for each 24-hour period it is late. **No work will be accepted for credit more than one week after the assignment deadline.**)

20% Attendance & Class Participation. Students are expected to attend every class, and to show through their participation that they have read the course materials and are able to work with and apply the concepts presented to the cases we study. One component of the participation grade will be weekly Canvas Discussion Posts (200 words each). These must be completed by the **Sunday before** the class for which the readings are assigned. Full credit is earned by students who show mastery of the materials and concepts.

30% Two short papers (5-6 pages). The first short paper, an analysis using the semiotic conceptual tool of Myth, will be **due Fri 9/23**. Students may choose between two topics for their second papers. One (**due Fri 10/21**) will be a film response, and the other (**due Fri 11/11**) will be focused on two novels. Details will be handed out in advance.

10% Term Paper Prospectus – A clear statement of the research question and outline of the topic, including a Literature Review (5-8 pages). **Due Fri 11/04**

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Term Paper – A research paper of approximately 16-25 pages, comparing nationalism in two cases. **Due TBD** (date of the course’s Final Examination Group).

### Expectations and Policies

**Attendance & Participation**

Students are expected to attend every section and ready to engage in discussion, seminar-style, as well as take notes. **Students may tablets or laptops only for taking notes and engaging with class discussion—if they become a distraction, they will be excluded from the classroom.**

Students are expected to participate actively, ask & answer questions, and be ready to give their opinions, as well as answer questions about the week’s readings and current events. A break of about 10 minutes’ time will occur roughly around 4:20pm, since the class period extends a total of two and three quarters’ hours.

### Course Outline and Schedule

**Note: All readings should be completed before the course meeting they are associated with.** Additional readings may be added, especially timely news articles, which may be e-mailed and linked in Canvas from week to week.

#### 1. 9/6 **Nation as a Concept**


#### 2. 9/13 **History, Myth, and the Power of “We”**


#### 3. 9/20 **Intellectual History of Nationalism**

- Huntington, pp 28-33
Fri 9/23, 5pm—Myth Paper due

4. 9/27  Classic Nationalism as Benevolent? The Czech Nation’s claim
   • Holy, pp 1-16, 27-66, 91-114, 118-149, 168-204

5. 10/04  National Identity and Post-Colonialism: A Précis of Indian Nationalism
   • Mondal, pp 44-70
   • Ashutosh Varshney, “India’s National Identity, Hindu Nationalism, and the Politics of Anxiety,” *Daedalus* v 122, No 3 (Summer, 1993), pp 227-261

6. 10/11  Russia, an Imperial Nation? I: An Empire Brought to Her Knees?

7. 10/18  Russia, an Imperial Nation? II: Empire Essential to Russia, or Putin?
   • Graeme Gill, “Putin, Nationalism, and Foreign Policy,” in Kanet & Sussex, eds. pp 42-60
   • Charles Ziegler, “Russia as a nationalizing state: Rejecting the western liberal order” in *International Politics*, Vol 53, no 5, pp 555-573

Fri 10/21 5pm—Film Paper Due

8. 10/25  Congo, Colony to Un-Nation? I: Colonization, Dictatorship, Collapse of Zaire
• Anna Maedl, “Rape as a Weapon of War in Eastern DRC? The Victims’ Perspective” in Human Rights Quarterly v 33 (2011), pp 128-147

9. 11/1 Congo, Colony to Un-Nation? II: Fragmentation and External Views
• John le Carré, The Mission Song (New York: Little, Brown, 2006), entire

Fri 11/04 5pm—Term Paper Prospectus & Literature Review due

10. 11/08 Congo: Colony to Un-Nation? III: Gender, Identity, and an Internal View
• Fiston Mwanza Mujila, Tram 83 (Dallas, TX: Deep Vellum Publishing, 2015), entire

Fri 11/11 5pm—Novels Paper due

11. 11/15 The United States of America: Multinational State or “Creedal” Nation?
• Guibernau, pp 119-137
• Judis, pp 74-80

12. 11/22 Constructing “MAGA America”? A response to Creedal Cosmopolitanism
• Huntington, pp 3-17, 53-66, 92-103, 171-199, 244-303, 309-335, 340-350, 362-366
• Judis, pp 40-73
• Joel Olson, “Whiteness and the Polarization of American Politics” in Political Research Quarterly v 61, No 4 (2008), pp 704-718

13. 11/29 Concluding Thoughts
No readings assigned—Comparative discussion of four cases and Student Paper Topics (no formal presentation, but students should be ready to discuss their papers’ cases and arguments.)

Final Paper Due—TBD (same date as final exam slot for the course)

Accessibility
Harvard University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for with disabilities. Students needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a
documented disability must present their Faculty Letter from the Accessible Education Office (AEO) and speak with the professor by the end of the second week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although faculty are invited to contact AEO to discuss appropriate implementation. Please call (617) 496-8707 or send an email to aeo@fas.harvard.edu for further information.

Honor Code

“Members of the Harvard College community commit themselves to producing academic work of integrity – that is, work that adheres to the scholarly and intellectual standards of accurate attribution of sources, appropriate collection and use of data, and transparent acknowledgement of the contribution of others to their ideas, discoveries, interpretations, and conclusions. Cheating on exams or problem sets, plagiarizing or misrepresenting the ideas or language of someone else as one’s own, falsifying data, or any other instance of academic dishonesty violates the standards of our community, as well as the standards of the wider world of learning and affairs.”

To help fulfill your commitment, especially with regarding to plagiarism and proper citing, you are encouraged to make full use of the Government Department’s GovWrites: a Resource for Concentrators. This resource has a number of very useful tools to improve your writing generally, and some very specific information about citations under the Working with Integrity section. The Harvard Guide to Writing with Sources is also highly useful.

Collaboration

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you will consult with classmates on the choice of research projects and share sources and evidence. However, any written work you submit for individual evaluation must be the result of your own research and writing and must reflect your own approach to the topic. All students must also adhere to standard citation practices in the social sciences and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, videos, and films that have helped you with your work. I recommend using the Chicago Manual of Style’s author-date format.