

Political Science 228: Nationalism and Interdependence
Dr. Kille - Take-Home Midterm (Spring 2007)

The midterm exam is take-home format, but must be turned in to my office by Wednesday February 21 at 3:20pm (the end of the in-class midterm time set on the syllabus). Since this is a take-home format, students are expected to incorporate citations and quotes from the class readings as part of their answer. As such, please provide a full bibliography of all sources referenced in the paper at the end. Please also complete the assignment independently, do not work with other students in the class on devising exact answers, although you are welcome to discuss any issues of confusion with your peers. Your answer should be a minimum of 6 pages (typed, double spaced, 12 point font, 1" margins - not including the bibliography) in length.

You must answer ONE of the two following questions. Be sure to answer ALL parts of each question.

-OR-

You may construct your own take-home essay question that allows you to present and analyze across a range of the material covered in the course thus far. Students choosing this option must have their question approved by the instructor no later than Friday February 16.

Question #1: History and Prospects for Nationalism

Part A. What is a state? Be sure to discuss all of the criteria that a political entity must possess to be considered a state. One of key aspects of being a state is possession of sovereignty: define sovereignty - including Philpott's three norms of sovereignty, detail the historical development of sovereignty, and explain the implications for international politics under the Westphalian system of "traditional statecraft" as described in the Morse reading. Morse (p. 42) concludes that "The ideal structure of international society formed with the Westphalia System have been transformed by the processes of modernization so that international society no longer conforms to those structures." Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement.

Part B. Both Smith and Dawisha emphasize the importance of considering the history of nations and theorizing about nations. What are the key arguments that each author makes? To what degree do they convince you?

Smith concludes his book by looking forward to the prospects for nationalism. What are the three key "claims and the ensuing debates" that Smith identifies in relation to the prospects for nationalism? Provide his position on each debate and explain whether you agree or disagree with these and his overall conclusions stressing the "sacred foundations" of nations. How does your position fit with the arguments established in Part A of your essay?

Part C. Explain how at least three of the readings from Section 3 of the syllabus would argue that the conflict between nations should be handled. Then explain how you believe conflict between nations should be addressed. Although independently derived solutions can be a part of your answer, you should also be sure to refer to specific readings for the ideas that you have drawn from them and should explain why you did not accept other arguments of the authors described in the first part of this section. How does your understanding of the history of states and nations affect your analysis in this section? Overall, what is your perspective on the possibility of ending conflict between nations?

Question #2: Approaches to the Study of Nationalism

Part A. Dawisha (p.3) observes that “vigorous debate has raged over the constituent elements of a nation and the interplay between and among these elements...This debate is encapsulated into three broad approaches: the primordialist, constructivist, and instrumentalist.” How does Dawisha’s categorization of the nationalism literature compare to Smith’s “paradigms” and Croucher’s “competing conceptualizations”? Set out the categories used by Smith and Croucher and explain how these categories fit with Dawisha’s discussion. Be sure to provide information on what each of the categories and paradigms focus on. If you were to write your own article on nationalism, what approach for nationalism would you advocate? Carefully explain what ideas are encompassed in your approach, drawing on the discussion in Smith, Croucher, and Dawisha where appropriate to demonstrate how you developed your ideas.

Part B. Dawisha (p.3) states, “Nation is a form of identity. Individuals identify themselves with their nation in the same way that they might identify with other forms of collective identity.” Build out of Part A to contrast a primordialist, constructivist, instrumentalist, post-modern, ethno-symbolic, and perpetual imagining understanding of national identity. What are the implications of each for the malleability of national identity? Explain the alternative ways to consider national identity that were presented in class. Out of all of these approaches to national identity, which approach do you support? Is this approach consistent with the argument that you made in Part A?

Part C. Brown (p.4) states, “The search for a single factor or factors that explains everything is comparable to the search for the Holy Grail - noble, but futile.” However, he does identify a range of potential underlying and proximate causes. Explain the difference between these two categories of variables. Describe - drawing upon Brown, Van Evera, and Lake & Rothchild - what underlying and proximate causes these different authors suggest. Which of the underlying causes do you think are the most important to have present? Which proximate cause(s) do you believe is (are) most likely to bring about nationalistic conflict? Mueller’s argument is not as complex as the other authors read for this section of the course. What does he argue is the key to understanding “ethnic war”? Do you agree with his argument? If so, how does this fit with your discussion of proximate and underlying causes earlier? If not, why are the reasons for conflict that you discussed earlier more, or less, crucial to focus on? How might the theoretical understanding of nationalism that you have established earlier allow us to better understand the sources of conflict between nations? How well does this understanding fit with the specifics provided otherwise in Part C of your answer?