

(3) Nation and Nationalism (12.09)

People (recap)

- We continue to speak about the people as the key theoretical and practical concept in political theory

Recap: "the people" is...

- the concept from the Age of Enlightenment / Modernity
- the source of political power (after decline of Christian legitimation)
- the system of institutions and relations between them (economic, military, demographic, ideological, ...)
- sum of individual wills OR the general will

Why then we need the concept NATION, which is practically the same (or so it seems)?

Normative Concept of Nation

NATION is normative (ideological, political, discursive) concept, rather than analytical - as PEOPLE

We need this concept to...

- understand how to use it as a normative concept (because Political Theory is normative theory, a type of ideological discourse)
- to invent instruments that explain/analyze such type of political community as NATION
- to seek arguments for or against it
- to distinguish from other types of political communities, such as Empires, Monarchies, Theocracies

so, how do we deal with it?

Nation as the most common state sovereignty model

National model is the most common model of a state sovereignty over the globe:

- the people is the source of sovereignty / political power (not God or nature)
- there is one people per state
- nation is viewed as a community of individual citizens (early Modern nations: possess property, be male, etc.)
- (usually, pre-globalization) mono-cultural, mono-lingual. Ethnic, lingual (gender) minorities are excluded from the nation.
- Nation states become dominant after (a) the fall of European empires post-WW1, (b) the transformation of the colonial system post-WW2

Nation and Republic

NATION is a normative concept, REPUBLIC is legal (more or less)

- Ex: UK is called nation, though it is not legally.

CIVIC NATION: members of nation are citizens (city members, politically (polis) active, not feudal SUBJECTs) - is contrasted with ETHNIC NATION

- middle class, bourgeoisie in 17th C. that confronts "absolute" monarchies
- though origins back to Cicero (natio = people)
- used throughout Middle Ages, refers to community of individuals born in one region (English N. in U. of Paris, Alemannian, Provencal, etc.)

Nations' contesting assumptions

Nation is a product of new economic relations of Modernity (Charles Tilly, Eric Hobsbawm;

- modern (military) conflicts, monopoly on violence
- invented traditions

Nation is a communication between individuals about their shared culture and community (Benedict Anderson)

- print capitalism
- imagined community
- nationalism before nations (J. Armstrong)

Nation is a community based on cultural myths and historical memory, ethnic continuity (Anthony E. Smith).

- symbolic practices & myths build nations

Ethnosymbolic approach - Anthony Smith

- Combines perennialism, constructivism, phenomenology - less radical approach
- nation is a continuation of ethnicity
- symbols, myth, irrational aspects of culture matter!
- nation is produced through practices (rites, rituals, symbols, holidays)
- nation is constructed, though not every construction attempt is successful (why?)

Nation is a group of people who have common and special elements of culture, a single economic system, civil rights for all members, a sense of solidarity arising from common experiences, and occupying a common territory

Smith A.E. Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach. 2009

Nations, Ethnicities, Nationalities

Ethno-cultural institutions can overlap (producing conflicts over national discursive borders): such as Russia-Ukraine, Serb-Croat, Polish-German-Jew-Czech (pre-WW2)

Ethnic nationalism (vs Civic) - assumption that the foundation of the nation is - first of all - ethnic, not civil

Nation / Ethnic group - question of the political recognition. Nations can become ethnicities (Israel, Assyria, Egyptian kingdom, Khorezm) and vice versa (Kosovo, Ukraine, Croatia)

Question of Nation / Nationality / Ethnos - is only in Soviet & Russian theory. Dates to Stalin (Marxism and National question, 1913)