

Lecture 14 Notes

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July 15, 2021

1. Nationalism is an ideology (belief system) which claims supreme loyalty from individuals for the nation and the state that represents it
2. Nationalism is one of the most important factors in world history and continues to be in contemporary international politics
3. When did it begin? The political focus on nationalism has evolved over the last five centuries (recall the Thirty Years War and the Treaty of Westphalia)
4. Where is it going? After World War II, some predicted an end to nationalism. Today, it is stronger than it has ever been
5. Is nationalism good or bad? Well, nationalism has both positive and negative aspects
6. On the positive side, it can promote democracy, self-government, economic growth, and social/political/economic diversity and experimentation
7. On the negative side, it can lead to isolationism, feelings of superiority, suspicion of others, and messianism
8. It can also cause instability and lead to foreign intervention and hyper-factionalization of states
9. Religion in International Politics
 - (a) Religion is one of the most ancient forces that influence world events. Objectively, it can be said to play a dual role in world politics
 - (b) On the one hand, it has been a source of humanitarian concern and a vehicle for pacifism, including but not limited to Gandhi and Indian foreign policy, Christian, Islamic, and other religious denominations and their relief work all over the world and in many cases is the basis for the anti-nuclear movement in Europe and the foundation of Liberation Theology in Latin America
 - (c) However, it has also been a force at the center of many bloody wars, including:

- i. The reaction in Europe to Islam, which led to the Crusades (1095–1291)
 - ii. The Protestant Reformation (1517), which led to the Thirty Years War (1618–1648)
- (d) In Western civilization, the process of secularization has led to a separation of church and state. Not so within the Islamic and Hindu world
- (e) And religion has also created divisions within countries, such as:
 - i. The Catholic and Protestant division in Ireland
 - ii. The Hindu, Muslim, Sikh divisions in India
 - iii. Divisions between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims in Iraq
 - iv. Jewish, Islamic, and Christian divisions in Lebanon and Israel

10. Islamic Concepts and Definitions

- (a) Islam — (which means “submission to God”, a Muslim being “one who submits”), is a monotheistic religion founded by Muhammad (570–632 a.d.), a prophet who received Allah’s teachings in a vision
- (b) The Koran — Is the central religious text of Islam, which Muslims consider the verbatim word of God
- (c) The Caliphs — Successors to Muhammad. They are described in the Koran as representatives of Allah on Earth, and also as leaders of the Ummah, the spiritual, cultural, and political community of Muslims
- (d) The notion of ”houses” or ”divisions” of the world in Islam such as Dar al-Islam (House of Islam) and Dar al-Harb (House of War) does not appear in the Koran or the Hadiths. This geo-political house of divisions was more acutely framed by a 13th century Islamic scholar, Ibn Taymiyyah, in response to Mongol invasions of Muslim lands
- (e) The concept of Jihad, is often in the West translated as “holy war,” but carries the broader idea of “struggle” which could be personal or religious

11. Political Heritage of Muslims 3 Historic Elements

- (a) A triumphant past
- (b) A clash with Christian powers, especially European
- (c) Domination of Muslims by Others:
 - i. Defeats after 1500 a.d.
 - ii. Ottoman Empire after WWI
 - iii. British/French/American colonialism

12. Islam and Nationalism

- (a) Today, the Ummah takes the form of a “Muslim pride” movement. This includes a rejection of direct interference from outside powers to the resurrection of cultural traditions, such as:
 - i. Banning alcohol
 - ii. Women covering their faces
 - iii. A legal system based on the Shari’ah
- (b) However, the creation of a united Ummah is not likely in the foreseeable future, primarily because of:
 - i. Nationalism
 - ii. Ethnic differences (Iranians, Kazakhs, Pakistanis, and many others who are not Arabic)
 - iii. Sectarian divisions (Sunni-Shia)
- (c) Within the House of Islam, religious differences are a source of intense conflict
- (d) Majority Sunnis and minority Shi’ites are at odds over the proper leadership of the Ummah
- (e) Sunnis recognize Abu-Bakr (Muhammad’s close companion and advisor) as the legitimate heir, while Shi’ites recognize Ali (Muhammad’s first cousin and son-in-law)