

# PATTERNS OF NATIONALISM IN POST-SOVIET STATES

## *Research Proposal by Marharyta Fabrykant*

### **(1) Key Question**

The topic of our research suggests the following key question: 'What typology of nationalism can most adequately account for varieties of nationalist attitudes in the Post-Soviet area?' This question is significant and deserves to be answered for three main reasons.

1. Theoretical models of nationalism from H.Kohn to M.Hroch to L.Greenfeld tend to assume that all the countries to the east of Germany display ethnic, or Eastern, nationalism, as opposed to civic, or Western, nationalism. On the other hand, the 20 years' history of Post-Soviet states present a considerable diversity in both intensity and content of nationalism, which cannot be wholly explained by existing dichotomous typology and therefore demands a different classification.

2. The Post-Soviet region is characterized by considerable internal variety in many aspects, such as economics, politics, religion and historical legacy. Most importantly, it contains regions representing all three stages of development, traditional, industrial and postindustrial. Besides, Post-Soviet states have undergone changes in virtually all spheres since the fall of Communism. This synchronic and diachronic variety makes the Post-Soviet area a unique laboratory for the study of social phenomena, including nationalism. For this reason the typology of Post-Soviet nationalism would possess not only descriptive value, but contribute to the ongoing theoretical debate on nationalism.

3. All the most influential theories of nationalism were formulated in 1060-1980-s, when the 'iron curtain' made data on the Soviet Union both unavailable and seemingly irrelevant. However, theoretical framework attempting to explain nationalism in all its existing and possible forms ought to take into equal consideration all regions. Therefore turning attention to patterns of Post-Soviet nationalism is necessary for providing accurate and well-grounded generalizations on the subject.

### **(2) Specific Contribution**

The proposed research topic may be placed, alternatively, in the context of Soviet and Post-Soviet studies or nationalism studies. Both variants are legitimate, but each of them refers to a large set of related issues and literature, therefore it would be advisable not to pursue both routes simultaneously. Because of our primary field of interest, we would choose the second option and suggest that results of this research may contribute to the nationalism studies. Therefore two types of theoretical sources are immediately relevant, namely, classical works introducing the most influential theories and, especially classifications of nationalism and texts focusing on nationalism in the target area of Post-Soviet States.

Review of principal theories of nationalism leads to a conclusion that in most of them typologies of nationalism are of secondary importance, with emphasis placed on a single explanatory model. It is especially true for radical theories from both sides of the specter. Both primordialists, e.g. P. van der Berghe and S.Grosby, and perennialists, e.g. J.Fishman and W.Connor (according to the classification of approaches to nationalism introduced by A.D. Smith in "Nationalism and Modernism" in 1995) present a nation as a really and necessarily existing entity of a certain invariable nature and view nationalism as a more or less accurate reflection of that status quo. On the opposite side, postmodernists, e.g. H.Bhabha and P.Chatterjee, regard nationalism as an artificial tool of manipulation created and recreated by elites and accepting an infinite variety of patterns.

The majority of theories, however, belong to the moderate modernist type (Smith's own ethnosymbolism is, as he states, rather an open approach than a coherent theory). The principal idea underlying all modernist theories is that both nationalism and nations appear in the period of modernity. Pioneers of modernization, according to these theorists, develop civic nationalism based on territorial and political unity, while societies with belated, partial and/or relatively unsuccessful

modernization, especially when this process takes place in the absence of own independent state, produce ethnic nationalisms based on unity of language, tradition and descent. While most theorists regard civic nationalism as logical, rational and in some obscure way 'not so nationalistic', opinions on ethnic nationalism vary from M.Hroch's approval of this ideology for its ability to mobilize and educate to M.Hechter's and E.Gellner's notions of civic nationalism a neutral adequate answer to certain historical circumstances to L.Greenfeld's interpretation of civic nationalism as an emotional response of resentment providing secondary psychological compensation at the cost of solving original objective problems.

While all these theories reflect part of the studied reality, even the combination of them all does not present a complete picture for several primarily methodological reasons.

First, these theories tend to either seclude nationalism as a thing in itself (this is especially true of ethnosymbolist portrayal of people as trying to reinterpret ethnonational symbols per se) or explain it in a one-way deterministic fashion as an immediate consequence of certain objective factors in economical or political spheres. In our own research we propose to view nationalism as neither separate nor epiphenomenal, but embedded in broader sets of values, which mediate influence of objective factors on certain patterns of nationalism.

Second, theorizing of nationalism has so far relied primarily on data from secondary historical sources depicting separate events and, in a more indirect way, on a theorist's implicit knowledge of history. Empirical data derived by means of immediate approach to respondents have exercised hardly any influence on major theories, serving as a source of illustration, not of justification and even less so of modification. On the contrary, our study is going to start from applying rigorous testing of hypotheses by means of quantitative data from World Values Survey and only afterwards apply contextual historical knowledge for more detailed explanation.

Finally, most theories focus on genesis of nationalism in general and in particular countries (the issue of when and where nations and nationalism first come into existence is still the most debatable, as seen in the volume 'When is a nation' ed. by G.Uzelac and A.Ichijo), with comparatively little attention to its subsequent development. Our study, by contrast, focuses on a recent period of 1990-2010 and adopts a longitudinal perspective.

As regards the literature specifically dedicated to nationalism in Post-Soviet countries, it abounds in valuable insights regarding situations in specific countries, but does not offer any generalizations regarding typology of nationalism, nor an empirical material for such generalization. This is true not only for numerous articles, especially published in the *Nationalities Papers*, as a journal devoted to national issue in post-Socialist countries except Russia, but also for books like A.Khazanov's "After the USSR: Ethnicity, Nationalism and Politics in the Commonwealth of Independent States" (1995), G.Smith et al.'s "Nation-building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands: the Politics of National Identities", R.Abdelai's "Nationalism and International Political Economy in Post-Soviet Eurasia", L.Barrington's "After Independence: Making and Protecting the Nation in Postcolonial and Postcommunist States". The approach adopted by them starts with stating a single category of Post-Soviet nationalism and then proceeds to analyze a situation in each country as a unique case. Indeed, as early as in 1984 Connor in his book 'The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy' argued that Soviet elites at all times exercised an opportunist approach to nationalism, which might lead to considerable variety difficult to conceptualize. However, if we turn from elites to society in general and assume that nationalism is embedded in the context of more fundamental values, then it appears both possible and important to develop a missing typology of Post-Soviet nationalism, which we see as the principle specific contribution of our proposed study.

### **(3) Theoretical Framework**

The key concept of *nationalism* is defined by us as a coherent set of attitudes recognizing significance of nations and national identities and connecting it with other realities as a source and/or object of explanation. By applying the concept of attitude we emphasize, first, that nationalism is not necessarily an explicit and coherent political ideology, but also an intrapersonal

loose collection of notions, second, that it is neither purely cognitive nor emotional, but a combination of both.

With regard to nationalism, we adopt a moderate social constructionist view, not to be confused with either primordialism or radical postmodernist approach. We regard nationality, that is, both nations and nationalism, not as primordial and/or transcendent realities, but as aspects of social reality, which are subject to gradual change, but not to elites' voluntaristic manipulation, because certain patterns of nationalism are embedded in broader context of value orientation. In order to provide this context in our study of nationalism, we turn to Inglehart's theory of modernization, because it allows to connect nationalism with multiple factors and recognizes its presence and significance not only in industrial societies, which is the dominant view in the contemporary debate on nationalism, but also in traditional societies, which, according to results of the World Values Survey, 'have high levels of national pride, and a nationalistic outlook' ([http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs/articles/folder\\_published/article\\_base\\_54c](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs/articles/folder_published/article_base_54c)) and, most importantly, in postindustrial societies: 'Even in the age of the internet, one's nationality remains a powerful predictor of one's values' (Inglehart, R., Welzel, C. (2005) *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 70). Such theoretical framework opens a possibility of explanatory study of patterns of nationalism in comparative and longitudinal perspective.

In defining possible alternative patterns of nationalism we propose to rely of the following concepts falling into dichotomies.

1. *Ethnic vs. civic types of nationalism*. As mentioned earlier, ethnic nationalism is centered on common descent, language and traditions and is past-oriented, while civic nationalism is based on territorial unity and political agreement and is present- and future-oriented. This typology captures most essential issues of debate on national identity.

2. *Exclusive vs. inclusive types of nationalism*. This dichotomy refers to the pressing issue of the possibility for a nation to accept new members. Contrary to the notion that ethnic nationalism is exclusive, and civic, inclusive, it is at least theoretically possible that ethnic nationalist who places emphasis not on descent, but on language and culture is ready to recognize as conational every person who masters both language and traditional practices, while civic nationalism may be exclusive if containing a belief that certain political ideals can only be inborn and not subsequently learned.

3. *Explicit vs. implicit types of nationalism*. This dichotomy is derived from M. Billig's notion of banal nationalism and reflects to what extent nationalistic attitudes are reflected in public actions.

4. *Strong vs. weak types of nationalism*. This dichotomy captures the degree of importance attributed to national identity and the level of national pride.

Put together, these concepts allow 24 combinations, the relative relevance of which for Post-Soviet states may be tested by means of empirical research.

#### **(4) Core Variables and Hypotheses**

The major dependent variables in our research is a pattern of nationalism, which, according to the theoretical framework, has 24 alternative meanings as combinations of 4 dichotomies.

Different theories of nationalism suggest, as stated earlier, a considerable variety of plausible independent variables. Our theoretical framework views nationalism as embedded in a set of values, therefore, as most values are interconnected, we propose to take the two plausible independent variables from Inglehart-Welzel cultural map of the world, namely to test how and to what extent various patterns of nationalism are determined by a country's adherence to traditional vs. secular-rational values and to survival vs. self-expression values.

This allows us to develop a number of alternative hypotheses. The obvious general scheme would be to assume that each of the two basic value dimensions might have, alternatively, positive, negative, non-linear (with different options) or no significant influence on each of the four dimensions of nationalism. All these hypotheses are going to be tested, but here, in addition to this

general principle, we would like to formulate some examples based on the existing knowledge of nationalism.

H1 Level of traditional values in Post-Soviet states has positive influence on level of ethnic nationalism, because it increases the importance of tradition in general, including national traditions.

Alternative hypothesis: Level of traditional values in Post-Soviet states has negative influence on level of ethnic nationalism, because it increases importance of religion, which is both transnational and more tangible than national traditions in many countries in the area.

H2 Level of self-expression values has positive influence on level of inclusive nationalism, because it increases freedom of choice and creates new possibilities for self-fulfillment, making competition with foreigners appear less strong.

Alternative hypothesis: Level of self-expression values has negative influence on level of inclusive nationalism, because it increases importance of individual success and strengthens competitiveness in society.

In general, we hypothesize that the traditional/secular-rational dimension is more predictive for ethnic vs. civic and strong vs. weak types of nationalism (traditional values lead to strong ethnic nationalism and vice versa), while the survival/self-expression value dimension is more predictive for exclusive vs. inclusive and explicit vs. implicit types of nationalism (survival values lead to exclusive and explicit nationalism and vice versa).

## **(5) Analyses and Modelling**

First of all, factor analysis is going to be used in order to establish in which way and to what extent the 4 outlined dichotomous typologies of nationalism are intercorrelated, what patterns they form and which of the theoretically discernible 24 alternative patterns are more typical for Post-Soviet states. The existing knowledge of nationalism suggests that the two most plausible patterns are strong exclusive explicit ethnic nationalism and, in complete opposition, weak inclusive implicit civic nationalism, but other patterns may appear due to the specific national situation of the region. If all 24 patterns are found to be equally present in all Post-Soviet countries, we will have to considerably revise our theoretical framework by creating different typologies of nationalism able to reflect the specificity of Post-Soviet nationalism.

Then we are going to use correlation analysis to test dominant correlations between patterns of nationalism and basic value dimension, and also estimate which components of these two dimensions have strongest correlation with nationalism. Afterwards multiple regression analysis based on longitudinal data is going to show the direction and degree of influence. If no statistically significant correlations are found, then we will have to consider alternative independent variables, e.g. direct influence of nationalistic ideologies or significant recent events (e.g. national conflicts).

## **(6) Targeted Data Base**

Our primary source of data is going to be World Values Survey, especially its fourth wave. The 2005 questionnaire consists a block of questions on national identity that allow operationalization of the outlined types of nationalism. V217 and V218 measure ethnic nationalism, and V219 and V220, civic nationalism. It is especially interesting that independent scales allow a person to be high, or low, both on civic and ethnic nationalism. V221, V37 and V47 refer to inclusive vs. exclusive nationalism. Items from V209 to V214 enable estimation of the strength of nationalism.

Regarding the inclusive vs. exclusive nationalism, items from V100 to V103 are of some indirect significance, but are not sufficient, because they reflect the level of political activism in general, not specifically relevant to expression of nationalist attitudes. Therefore a special scale ought to be developed, principally based on M.Billig's notion of banal nationalism, but also on

other theories containing types of nationalistic actions, such as existence of nationalist political parties and the level of their popularity, frequency and intensity of national conflicts etc. All these items may be quantified and estimated by applying relevant data from monitoring organizations, official reports and mass-media. This operationalization may prove reliable, provided careful scaling and sufficiently broad and varied set of data.

The longitudinal analysis is going to be based on data from therefore waves of the World values Survey. The principal problem here is that, although 1990, 1995 and 2000 questionnaires enable operationalization of strong vs. weak and inclusive vs. exclusive types of nationalism, it does not contain items like V217 to V220 in the 205 questionnaire. Therefore, it is necessary to rely in the longitudinal study on alternative data sources on ethnic vs. civic types of nationalism. Fortunately, this is the most popular typology of nationalism, and results of research conducted separately in various Post-Soviet countries may be used, provided careful meta-analysis.

### **(7) Roadmap**

In our research we are going to follow the following analytical steps.

1. Preliminary stage: collecting and systematizing main ideas on Post-soviet nationalism in relevant literature and solving the afore-mentioned problem of operationalization of explicit vs. implicit types of nationalism.

2. Factor analysis of the four dichotomous typologies of nationalism based on the data of the fourth wave of the World Values survey from all Post-Soviet countries.

3. Correlation analysis between two basic sets of values and patterns of nationalism based on the data of the fourth wave of the World Values survey from all Post-Soviet countries.

4. Longitudinal regression analysis of influence of basic sets of values on patterns of nationalism based on the data of all the four waves of the World Values survey from all Post-Soviet countries.

5. Comparative analysis in order to ascertain which results of our research are specifically Post-Soviet and which universal.

### **Plans for January-April 2011**

#### **(1) Literature to read**

First of all, I hope to be able to gain access to R. Inglehart' *The silent revolution. Changing values and political styles among Western publics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), which contains the chapter "Parochialism, Nationalism and Supra-nationalism" of obvious significance to my research.

Although I have read most major theoretical works on nationalism, I would like to revise them, especially those mentioning the Post-Soviet region, and to monitor new significant texts on the subject that are likely to appear in the first quarter of 2011.

The major part of literature I need on this stage of my research is a large number of articles on nationalism in separate Post-Soviet countries, starting with journals like *Nations&Nationalism*, *The nationalities Papers*, *National Identities*, *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* and others, and also materials of major international conferences on nationalism, especially those organized by ASEN and ASN. In addition I might need historical literature in order to acquire general understanding of national situation in various Post-Soviet states.

#### **(2) Statistical techniques to learn or improve**

The techniques I have already been trained in, but need to improve, are various techniques of factor analysis and regression analysis. I need to acquire much additional knowledge on techniques of longitudinal analysis, techniques of aggregate data analysis and especially meta-analysis. I would be interested in courses on these three types of techniques, but primarily in a specific course of statistical techniques most widely used in large scale cross-national research, provided that such a course exists.