

POLITICAL SPHERE

Nation vs National Project

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Contents

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Andrei Kazakevich. Concepts (Ideas) of Belarusian Nation Since Independence, 1990-2009

The article investigates main concepts of Belarusian nation that have been shaped and articulated in Belarusian intellectual and political domains in 1990–2009 in the context of history of political ideas. The publication resulted from study of some hundreds books, articles and political documents. The differences and main trends in understanding of Belarusian nation and public institutions that should shape it are demonstrated. Brief history, intellectual background and general characteristics of each trend are described.

Keywords: History of Ideas, Belarusian Nation, Nation-Building, Intellectual History, Identity.

Siarhei Bohdan. The National Democratic Project of Belarusian Politics in 1987–1995: Zianon Pazniak's Version

The article investigates internal politics issues in the National Democratic project through ideas of the most prominent representative from this faction of Belarusian politics – Belarusian People's Front's leader Zianon Pazniak – in late 1980s and early 1990s, i. e. in the time of his most intensive political activities in the country. It attempts at outlining the structure of this part of the project, as well as identify main contents and priorities of the project. The special focus is made on key concept of 'National Revival' and its content ambiguity.

Keywords: Belarusian Politics, Zianon Pazniak, Belarusian People's Front, National Democratic Movement, Ideology, Political Project, Nationalism.

Aliaksei Lastouski. Russocentrism as a Belarusian Identity Project

The article analyzes the main features and ideas of Russocentrism as an intellectual project of Belarusian identity since establishing an independent state. It deals with genesis, intellectual and political sources, evolution and main proponents, relations with other projects, representations of the past, present and future of Belarusian nation which are offered by this project.

Keywords: Russocentrism, Western Rusism, Nationalism, Belarusian Identity, Intellectual History.

Solvita Denis. Strategic “Mixture” for Nation – New Year Congratulation Speeches by A. Lukashenka (2003–2009)

The article is a study of the political discourse of the Belarusian authorities in recent years based on the New Year speeches by President Alexander Lukashenko. The main focus is on the image of the nation, national interests, national characteristics and threats offered in Presidents’ speeches. Using the method of critical analysis / study of discourse author answers the questions which nation-building strategies are used in Belarusian President’s speeches and, most importantly, which strategic goals he tries to achieve by them.

Keywords: Political Communication, Belarusian Politics, Political Discourse, Ideology, Nation-Building.

Per Anders Rudling. Lukashenka and the “Red-Browns”: National Ideology, Commemoration of the Past and Political Belonging

The Belarusian leader’s inconsistent political line has confused many observers, and the official state “ideology” is being seen as a populist move. Initially elected on a platform of restoration of a union with Russia, Lukashenka’s Belarus has been going through a period of national consolidation, and since 2002 increasingly distanced itself from Moscow. While Lukashenka’s foreign policy orientation has changed, his use of Soviet historical references has not. This article is a study of Lukashenka’s political orientation, from 1994 to 2008, his reinvention of himself from pan-Slavic Russophile to defender of Belarusian independence.

Keywords: Lukashenka, Belarusian Politics, National Ideology, Nation Building, Nationalism.

Diversities of nationalisms

Hakki Taş. Nationalism and its Ambivalence. Positive and Negative Selves in Greek Nationalism

This paper focuses on the psychological functions of nationalism using the case of the modern Greek nation-building process. It also attempts to prove that nations embrace multiple, sometimes conflicting references from the past in order to maintain the national self-esteem. The resulted ambivalence in the very definition of the nation can be compensated by an emphasis on the differences from the outgroups, namely, enemy or rival nations. For the analysis, two terms are operationalized: the positive and negative national selves, which underline the constructed and relational character of nationalism. The selective use of the Hellenic and Byzantine past for the formation of Greek identity, the creation of the significant Other, and finally the impact of the European Union on the conception of Greekness are analyzed within this framework.

Keywords: National Identity, Greek Nationalism, Ambivalence, Hellenism, Nation-building.

Aleksei Mikhalew. Deconstructing the “Senior Brother”: Experience of Post-Soviet Transformation in Mongolian Nationalism

Collapse of the Communist system caused similar tendencies in sociopolitical development of the most former Warsaw Pact's countries, and in particular led to an increase in ethnic nationalism. Mongolia is not an exception among them. Historically, ethnic nationalism was a means of decolonization in Asian countries. Then, in 1990s, it was used for de-Sovietization. In Mongolia, this trend began to lose its actuality only by early 2000s. By that time many nationalizing post-Soviet countries had completely turned into national states. New identity, loyalty and system of political myths were formed. The research is dedicated to studying these phenomena in the Mongolian politics.

Keywords: Internationalism, Nation Project, Colonialism, Post-Soviet Transformation.

Aliaksandr Filipau. “Eternal Arab Message (Revelation)”, “Revival” and “Spirit” Concepts in Arab Nationalism in 20th Century

The article considers one of the main concepts in the ideology of the Ba'ath Party, which has been ruling Syria since 1963. The article is based on the writings of party's ideologist and co-founder M. 'Aflaq. It is focused on the Islamic roots of the “Eternal Arab Message (Revelation)”, “Revival” and “Spirit” concepts and their role in consolidation of the heterogeneous Syrian society.

Keywords: Eternal Arab Message (Revelation), Ba'ath Party, Michel 'Aflaq, Arab Nationalism, Syria.

Music and Politics

Ivan Lysiuk. Far-Right Music in Russia: Black Metal and Pagan Metal Cases

The article considers expansion of far-right ideology on subcultural level in contemporary Russia. Taken as examples, the dynamically developing scenes of far-right Black and Pagan Metal have been investigated. The author defines the reasons for the scene's growth, tracks down the history of its formation, provides the detailed analysis of its value and worldview foundations. Far-right musical scene in the article is presented as a phenomenon which has not only cultural or counter-cultural, but also political dimensions, being politicized to such an extent that creative works of the musicians became an instrument of radical propaganda. The synthesis of political and religious elements, building of an alternative spirituality on the basis of reconstructed pre-Christian beliefs are also characteristic for the Russian far-right scene. Issues dealing with religious – Pagan, in this case – identity of the scene's subjects are considered as well.

Keywords: Black Metal, Pagan Metal, National Socialism, Neo-Paganism, Music, Subcultures.

History of ideas

Aliaksandr Sharniakin. Bolshevik Nation-Building Theory and Practices at the Beginning of Soviet Polity Formation

This article considers the development of the Bolshevik National theory in the context of political developments and the centrifugal tendencies after the February 1917 revolution in Russia. It is focused on a possibility of federal structure in the Marxist-Leninist national concept as well as on the situational (“concrete-historical”) approach in addressing national issues. In addition, this article considers the national policy of the Bolsheviks in the first year of the establishment of Soviet Russia.

Keywords: Nation-Building Theory, Lenin, Bolsheviks, Nation-Building Policy, Federalism.

Identity

Uladzislau Ivanou. Self-Identity and Culture of Northern Belarusian Orthodox Old Believers in Late 19th – early 21st Centuries

The article examines different models of development of the Orthodox Old Believers identity in Belarus in the 19th – 21st centuries. Based on the first 1897 census of the Russian Empire population and on the basis of modern ethnographic expeditions, the author tries to identify the current cultural situation and in particular the identity of the Old Believers in North Belarus. Given the Census data and ethnic history author notes different, sometimes contradictory tendencies in the development of their culture and identity: acculturation, assimilation, contra-acculturation and syncreticism.

Keywords: Orthodox Old Believers, Old Believers in Belarus, National Identity, Religious Identity, Russification.

Reviews

Andžej Pukšto. Gente Lithuana, nazione Lithuana (Dariusz Szpoper. Gente Lithuana, nazione Lithuana. Myśl polityczna i działalność Konstancji Skirmuntt (1851–1934). Arche. Gdańsk. 2009)

Review of the book on life, political and cultural activities of Konstancja Skirmuntt authored by the famous Polish scholar D. Szpoper.

Keywords: Konstancja Skirmuntt, “Krajoucy”, Lithuanian National Movement, Belarusian National Movement.

Aliaksei Lastouski. Russia as a Disease, Literature as Evil (Эва М. Томпсан. Песняры імперыі: расійская літаратура і посткалانیялізм / Пераклад з англ. мовы Т. Нядбай. Мн. : Медыясонт, 2009)

The review considers the Belarusian translation of Ewa M. Thompson’s “Imperial Knowledge. Russian Literature and Colonialism” which is focused on postcolonial deconstruction of Russian literature as an instrument of imperial power.

Keywords: Imperialism, Nationalism, Colonialism, Identity, Ideology.