

Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies

School of International Studies

Jawaharlal Nehru University

Course Title: **Politics and Society in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova**

Course (MA/PhD): **Ph.D**

Course Type (Core/Optional): **Optional**

Course Teacher: **Dr Rashmini Koparkar**

Credit: **Two**

Contact Hours: **Four hours per week**

Course Rationale

Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova constitute the east European part of the erstwhile Soviet space. After being under the Soviet rule for more than seven decades, these republics became independent in 1991 and chose distinct paths towards economic and political transformation. Nonetheless, this region has experienced tremendous geo-political and geo-cultural upheaval in the past three decades culminating in events like revolutions, regime changes and conflicts; which put this region in the list of vulnerable zones of crises. At this backdrop, it becomes necessary for the students of Eurasia to study and understand the attributes and nuances of this region in general and of these three countries in particular.

Course Objectives

This course aims to familiarize the students with history, society, culture and political processes within Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. Despite being part of the single sub-regional space and having shared historical and cultural elements, these countries have followed different trajectories in recent past. The reasons for this can be found in the socio-political forces that are driving the changes in these republics, and the historical context they have developed within. Creating a holistic understanding about the three republics will help the students comprehend the contemporary events with a better clarity.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to;

1. Develop comprehensive understanding of the east European part of the post-Soviet space in general and Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova in particular.
2. Understand the political processes within these three republics, including their constitutions, governments, institutions, revolutions and various ideological debates.
3. Analyse the nation-building process, identity, inter-ethnic relations, social realities, and ethno-cultural challenges.

Evaluation Method: Term Paper Presentation and End-Semester Examination

Course Content

Unit I: Theoretical Framework

This unit will introduce the concepts like state, nation and nation-states in the context of the course. It will also cover theories relating to security, security dilemma and challenges in the context of the small states. Moreover, it will include the variable-oriented comparison of the three units, ie. Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. This unit will cover:

- State, Nation, Nation-state
- Small States and Security challenges
- Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova: Similarities and Differences

Readings:

Galal, Abdelraouf Mostafa (2019), “External behavior of small states in light of theories of international relations”, *Review of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. 5:1, pp. 38-56.

Keohane, Robert O. (2006), “LILLIPUTIANS’ DILEMMAS: Small States in International Politics” in Christine Ingebritsen et al. (eds.) *Small States in International Relations*, Washington: Washington University Press, pp. 55-76.

Long, Tom (2017), “Small States, Great Power? Gaining Influence Through Intrinsic, Derivative, and Collective Power”, *International Studies Review*, Vol. 19:2, June 2017, pp. 185-205.

Mackinder, Halford J. (2004), “The Geographical Pivot of History”, reprinted in *Geographical Journal* 170, no.4, pp. 298-321.

Rejai, Mostafa & Cynthia H. Enloe (1969), “Nation-States and State-Nations”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 13: 2, June 1969, pp. 140-158.

Unit II: Historical Evolution and Social Changes

This unit will cover the history of the three republics in detail from the ancient, medieval and the modern period. The historical overview will include political as well as the social aspects in these territories. It will focus on the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries; especially the big powers’ competition and changing borders during this period. Tsarist and Soviet period will be dealt with extensively including the creation of USSR. Social changes during the Soviet period will be covered too. This unit will cover:

- Ancient and medieval history: Kievan Rus
- Political evolution and social changes in the modern times
- Tsarist and Soviet Period
- Social Changes during the Soviet period

Readings:

Casu, Igor (2015), “Moldova under the Soviet Communist Regime: History and Memory” in Vladimir Tismaneanu & Bogdan C. Iacob eds. *Remembrance, History, and Justice: Coming to terms with traumatic pasts in democratic societies*, pp. 347-372.

Lewytzkyj, Borys (1984), *Politics and Society in Soviet Ukraine, 1953-80*, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, Alberta, Canada.

Plokyh, Serhii (2006), *The origins of the Slavic nations: premodern identities in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus*, Cambridge: New York: Cambridge University Press.

Reid, Anna (2022), “Putin's War on History: The Thousand-Year Struggle over Ukraine”, *Foreign Affairs*, 101(3), May/June 2022, pp. 54-63.

Snyder, Timothy (2003), *The reconstruction of nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999*, New Haven, [Conn.]: Yale University Press.

Subtelny, Orest (2009), *Ukraine: A History*, Toronto : University of Toronto Press.

Unit III – Political Processes and State-Building

This unit will mainly deal with the political processes in the post-independence period. In last three decades, Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova have faced a diverse set of political challenges and prospects. All the three republics had started with the democratization process; but seem to have gone down in different trajectories. Challenges like social cleavages, corruption and foreign interference seem to have hampered their political journey.

This unit will extensively deal with the politics of these three countries separately in three sub-topics, covering their constitutions, democratic institutions, separation of powers, elections, regime changes and even revolutions. Special attention will be drawn at various political and ideological debates in the three republics. This unit will cover:

- Political Processes and State-Building in Ukraine
- Political Processes and State-Building in Belarus
- Political Processes and State-Building in Moldova

Readings:

Burkhardt, Fabian (2020), “Moldova - Key Challenges and Political Developments”, *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen*, 60(01-02), pp. 147-159.

Clark, T.D. (2008), “State-Building: A Comparative Study of Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, and Russia”, *CHOICE: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, 45(8), pp. 1410 Ioffe, Grigory (2004), “Understanding Belarus: Economic and Political Landscape”, *Europe- Asia Studies*, Vol. 56(1), pp. 85-118.

Cukrowski, Jacek et al. (2003), “Moldova: Assessment of Civil Society and Democratic Institutions”, *Studies and Analyses*, Center of Social and Economic Research, Warsaw.

Korosteleva, Elina A. & Colin W. Lawson & Rosalind J. Marsh (Eds.) (2003), *Contemporary Belarus: between democracy and dictatorship*, London: Routledge.

Kuzio, Taras (1998), *Contemporary Ukraine: Dynamics of post-Soviet Transformation*, Armonk: M. E. Sharpe.

Pisano, Jessica (2022), “How Zelenski has changed Ukraine”, *Journal of Democracy*, 33(3), pp. 5-13.

Quinlan, Paul D. (2002), “Moldova under Lucinschi”, *Demokratizatsiya*, 10 (1), Winter 2002, pp. 83-102.

Richard Sakwa (2016), *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the borderlands*, London : I.B. Tauris.

Yekelchyk, Serhy (2008) “Out of Russia’s Long Shadow: The Making of Modern Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova” in Oliver Schmidtke and Serhy Yekelchyk (eds.) *Europe’s Last Frontier?: Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine Between Russia and the European Union*, New York, Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 9-29.

Unit IV: Nation-building and Identity

This unit will explore the process of nation-building that unfolded in the three republics and will focus on the State initiatives. Formation and evolution of national identities and their challenges will be dealt with in detail. Various collective social identities like ethnicity, language, religion, and their overlaps and divergences will also be investigated. This unit will cover:

- Nation-bulding processes: top-down programmes
- Nationalism and formation of National Identities
- Challenges to nation-building: sub-nationalism, regionalism, ethnic divisions
- Ethno-Cultural identities and faultlines; Politics of Memory

Readings:

Bikanau, Philipp (2022), *Belarussian Identity in 2022: A Quantitative Study*, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Kyiv.

King, Charles (1994), “Moldovan Identity and the Politics of Pan-Romanianism”, *Slavic Review*, 53(2), Summer, 1994, pp. 345-368.

Kuzio, Taras (1998), *Ukraine: State and Nation building*, London: Routledge.

Shevel, Oxana (2023), “A Decade of Dramatic Change in Ukrainian Society”, *Current History*, October 2023, 122 (846), pp. 273–276.

Tishkov, Valery (2000), “Identity in Formation. The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad”, *Studies In Comparative International Development*, 35(2).

Zhurzhenko, Tatiana (2014), “A Divided Nation? Reconsidering the Role of Identity Politics in the Ukraine Crisis”, *Die Friedens-Warte*, 89(1/2), *Die Ukraine-Krise (2014)*, pp. 249-267.

Unit V: Societal Issues and Governance Challenges

This unit is devoted to understanding the social issues in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. The social behaviour, change in the society and challenges will be discussed. It will cover problems like inequality, social cleavages, corruption, poverty, gender disparity and problems of ethno-linguistic minorities. Role of civil society, media and social media will also be looked into. This unit will cover:

- Social Issues: poverty, inequality, social cleavages, minority question
- Governance Challenges: Corruption, Criminalization of Politics
- Gender Issues
- Role of civil society and media

Readings:

Ananyeu, Dzmitry et al. (2013), *Participation of Women in Public and Political Life*, Country Report, East European School of Political Studies, Minsk.

Bartlett, Will & Vesna Popovski (2013), *Local governance and social cohesion in Ukraine*, Search Working Paper.

Boulegue, Mathieu (2018), *Civil Society under Russia's Threat: Building Resilience in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova*, Russia and Eurasia Programme, Chatham House, London.

Gee, Gretchen Knudson (1995), "Geography, Nationality, and Religion in Ukraine: A Research Note", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 34(3), September 1995), pp. 383-390.

Lenzi, Mark (2002), "Lost Civilization: The Thorough Repression of Civil Society in Belarus", *Demokratizatsia*, 14 (4), pp. 401-422.

Terzi-Barbarosie, Daniela (2013), *Participation of women in public and political life in the Republic of Moldova*, Report developed in the framework of the Eastern Partnership Facility of the Council of Europe, European Institute of Political Studies, Chisinau.

Additional Readings

Astapenia, Ryhor (2023), *Rethinking Western Policy towards Belarus*, Russia and Eurasia Programme, Chatham House, London.

Barkanov, Boris (2015) "Crisis in Ukraine: Clash of Civilizations or Geopolitics?". In Roger.E Kanet and Matthew Sussex (eds.). *Power, Politics and Confrontation in Eurasia*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 210-239.

Bremmer, Ian (2003), "Nation and State-building in Eurasia", *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, 4(1), Winter-Spring 2003, pp. 29-37.

Colton, Timothy J. (2022), "Ukraine and Russia: War and Political Regimes", *Journal of Democracy*, 33(4), October 2022, pp. 20-36.

Crawther, William (2023), "Moldova's First Quarter Century: Flawed Transition and Failed Democracy", *Nationalities Papers*, 51(1), pp. 33-46.

- Dawisha, Karen & Bruce Parrott (1994), *Russia and the New states of Eurasia, The Politics of Upheaval*, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-55
- Douglas, Nadja (2023), “Belarus: “Securitization” of State Politics and the Impact on State-Society Relations”, *Nationalities Papers*, 51(4), pp. 855-874.
- Enloe, Cynthia (2023), “Women and War: Gender and Militarism in Wartime Ukraine”, *Journal of International Affairs*, 75(2), pp. 285-292.
- Franziska Exeler (2022), *Ghosts of War: Nazi Occupation and Its Aftermath in Soviet Belarus*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Grosse, Tomasz Grzegorz (2023). “The War in Ukraine as a State-building Factor of European Integration”, *Journal of International Affairs*, 75(2), April 2023, pp.27-44.
- Gottlieb, Stuart, “Ukraine and the End of the “New World Order”, *Journal of International Affairs*, 2023 Apr 01. 75(2), 265-276.
- Kulakevich, Tatsiana (2020), “National Awakening in Belarus: Elite Ideology to 'Nation' Practice”, *SAIS Review of International Affairs*, 40(2), Summer-Fall 2020, pp. 97-110.
- Mancoff, Jeffrey (2022), “Russia’s War in Ukraine: Identity, History and Conflict”, Washington, D.C. Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).
- Masters, Jonathan (2023), “Ukraine: Conflict at the Crossroads of Europe and Russia”, Council on Foreign Relations.
- Marcin Kosienkowski; William Schreiber. Lanham, Md (2012), *Moldova: Arena of International Influences*, Lexington Books.
- Meurs, Wim van (1998), “Carving a Moldavian Identity out of History”, *Nationalities Papers*, 26(1), March 1998, pp. 39-56.
- Meurs, Wim van (2015), “Moldova: Nested Cases of Belated Nation-building”, *Revue d'études comparatives Est-Ouest*, 46(1), March 2015, pp.185-209.
- Marples, David R. (2021), “Changing Belarus”, *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 63:3-4, 278-295,
- Minakov, Mikhail & Matthew Rojansky (2015), “Democracy in Ukraine: Are we there yet?”, Kennan Cable, Kennan Institute.
- Mitrasca, Marcel (2002), *Moldova : A Romanian Province Under Russian Rule: Diplomatic History From the Archives of the Great Powers*, New York: Algora Publishing.
- Nalbandov, Robert (2014), *Democratization and instability in Ukraine, Georgia, and Belarus*, online resource.
- Parmentier, Florent (2023), “Moldova, a Political System Under Pressure: Between European Aspirations and War in Ukraine”, *Russie.Eurasie.Visions*, No. 128, French Institute of International Relations, IFRI, May 2023.
- Rakityanskaya, Anna (2023), “Belarusian Politics and Society Web Archive: Preserving the Belarusian Grassroots Protest”, *The Journal of Belarussian Studies*, Vol. 12, pp. 81–94.

- Reisinger, William M. et al. (1994), "Political Values in Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania: Sources and Implications for Democracy", *British Journal of Political Science*, 24(2), pp. 183-223.
- Remler, Philip (2022), *Transdnistria, Moldova, and Russia's War in Ukraine*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Ronnas, Per & Nina Orlova (2000), "Moldova's Transition to Destitution", *Sida Studies*, Sweden.
- Roper, Steven D. (2008), "From Semi-Presidentialism to Parliamentarism: Regime Change and Presidential Power in Moldova", *Europe-Asia Studies*, 60(1), January 2008, pp. 113-126.
- Rouda, Uladzimir (2012), "Belarus: Transformation from Authoritarianism towards Sultanism", *Baltic Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 1(1), pp. 62-76.
- Shraibman, Artyom (2018), *The House that Lukashenko Built: The Foundation, Evolution and Future of the Belarussian Regime*, Carnegie Moscow Center.
- Solchanyk, Roman (1994), "The Politics of State Building: Centre-Periphery Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine", *Europe-Asia Studies*, 46(1), pp. 47-68.
- Tishkov, Valeriĭ Aleksandrovich (1997), *Ethnicity, nationalism and conflict in and after the Soviet Union : the mind aflame*, London: Sage Publications.
- Way, Lucan A. (2005), "Authoritarian State Building and the Sources of Regime Competitiveness in the Fourth Wave: The Cases of Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine", *World Politics*, 57(2), January 2005, pp. 231-261.
- Wilson, Andrew (2011), *Belarus*, New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Wilson, Josh (2015), "Ukraine: Between Russia and Europe", *Geohistory*, Feb 01, 2015.
- Yekelchuk, Serhy (2015), *The Conflict in Ukraine, What Everyone Needs to Know*, Oxford University Press