

multinational force in the 2003 Iraq War, protested the government by chanting slogans, “If we cannot stop the war in Iraq, we cannot stop the war on the Korean peninsula” (p. 148). It was a big risk for the regional interests of a middle-power country like South Korea to take part in the war, given the multi-sectarian and multi-ethnic society of Iraq. Prioritizing its commercial and construction activities under U.S. policies in the region, South Korea reluctantly sent alternative military aid containing “150 military medical personnel, \$280 million financial grant, and five military transport aircrafts as a logistical support” (p. 140). In the conclusion, the author indicates that there are three types of middle powers: functional, behavioral, and ideational. It is argued that the ideational facet is the prevailing feature of South Korea’s middle-power diplomacy because “South Korea has to pursue its national interests while complying with U.S. demands” and interventionist approach in the Middle East and North Africa (p. 186).

The book has fundamental shortcomings in two respects. First, although Türkiye is said to have established the first official relations with South Korea in the region, the focus on energy-rich relations does not indicate what the impact of “middle power diplomacy” could be in other countries. Secondly, the argument that the U.S. embargoes in the region have harmed the interests of countries like South Korea, whereas in the reconstruction process these allied countries have been prioritized, makes the application of the type of diplomacy put forward in the book questionable in this respect. On the other hand, the strengths of the book include the presentation of how the “middle power diplomacy” approach is shaped in the state decision-making process within a conceptual framework, the detailed presentation of the historical, political, and economic relations between South Korea and the countries mentioned in the book, the support of the claims with quantitative data and the provision of different examples on a similar subject.

Strategic Uses of Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict: Interest and Identity in Russia and the Post-Soviet Space

By Pål Kolstø

Edinburgh University Press, 2022, 294 pages, \$27.21, ISBN: 9781474495011

Reviewed by Ensar Kivrak, Sakarya University

Pål Kolstø’s book, *Strategic Uses of Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict: Interest and Identity in Russia and the Post-Soviet Space*, examines nationalism as an instrument for gaining power and interests in the gap of authority that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In this sense, Kolstø attributes an instrumental role to nationalism but empha-



sizes that the instrumental role is not enough to explain post-Soviet nationalism. Indeed, nationalism requires a certain historical and cultural foundation in order to emerge.

The book argues that nationalism and ethnic conflicts are used as a strategic tool to gain power and influence. Together with a new introduc-

tory theoretical chapter, the book consists of eight articles and book chapters based on Kolstø's more than 30 years of work on nationalism and ethnic conflicts in post-Soviet states. Kolstø presents case studies in Russia and the former Soviet Union, with both an overarching theoretical framework and chapter-specific theoretical discussions. The book is based on empirical cases and primary sources. Kolstø argues that ethnic conflicts in the non-Russian republics are not only rooted in struggles for collective identity, but also in interests such as jobs, wealth and status. He also analyzes the transformations of Russian nationalism, both among the ruling elite and on the opposition side. Except for chapter 2, which focuses on nineteenth-century Russia, the book covers the period between the Perestroika era and the outbreak of the Crimean War in 2014.

In the first chapter of this book, Kolstø explains nationalism through both instrumentalist and culturalist approaches. While culturalists put the importance of identities and thus nationalist sentiments at the center of their analysis, instrumentalists argue that people pursue individual and group interests by supporting nationalist thoughts and attitudes. The first chapter emphasizes the distinctions between culturalists like Anthony D. Smith, Montserrat Guibernau and John Hutchinson and instrumentalists like John Breuilly, Joseph Rothschild and V. P. Gagnon. However, Kolstø concludes from his own research that there is always a self-interest motivation behind the actions of nationalists. For this reason, Kolstø's preferred position is in favor of instrumentalists. Nevertheless, he connects the instrumentalist approach with the culturalist approach: Nationalism is not only a primitive need to belong but also a means of achieving interests such as job, prestige, position, and wealth.

In the following chapters, Kolstø foregrounds the instrumentalist approach, which argues that national identity is used to achieve individual or group interests. He analyzes deeply how nationalism was used to gain power and interests during the Perestroika period and in the post-Soviet era. In fact, even before the collapse of the Soviet Union, Soviet leaders used national sentiments for their own political aims like mobilizing public support for the war. During the Second World War, the Soviet media's praise of Russian culture and national heroism is an example of this. On the other hand, during the disintegration of the Soviet Union, local leaders used ethno-national language to legitimize and make more effective their opposition to central authority. These two seemingly unrelated examples prove the instrumental use of nationalism for self-interest.

Just as most scholars date the emergence of nationalism to the 19th century, Kolstø dates the instrumental use of nationalism back to the antisemitism that emerged in Tsarist Russia in the 19th century. In chapter 2, the author discusses the nationalist motivations behind antisemitism in the Tsarist era. The main motivation behind this nationalism was the pursuit of economic interest. Because the instigators of the nationalism that emerged in this period were people doing the same jobs as Jews such as artisans, merchants or workers. Economic competition and conflicts of interest between these groups and Jews played an important role in the emergence of nationalism. However, these findings do not provide a fully coherent explanation of Russian nationalism and do not sufficiently include historical-sociological elements.

From chapter 3 onwards, the book focuses firstly on the Perestroika period, which included the economic and political system

reconstruction and reform movements from the 1980s onwards, and then on the post-Soviet period. The third chapter points out that population growth and the increase in the number of educated people led to competition for jobs during the Perestroika period. The chapter focuses on the role of nationalism and ethnic conflict in this competition.

Chapter 5 explains how conflicts in the successor states of the Soviet Union were resolved without turning violent through the concept of rootedness. It shows that nation-building in the Soviet successor states developed around the symbolic supremacy of indigenous groups like Kazakhs in Kazakhstan or Bashkirs in Bashkortostan. The indigenous peoples of the member states have often been at a disadvantage compared to migrants from other regions of the union, especially Russian migrants, who are better able to compete for jobs, positions and political influence. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, the rootedness argument was used to argue that indigenous peoples should be given priority in appointments and access to resources. In post-Soviet cases, the acceptance of the argument by the newcomers themselves has prevented the emergence of large-scale ethnic conflicts. Rootedness has thus mostly helped to avoid ethnic conflicts despite ethnic diversity in the post-Soviet states.

Chapter 5 focuses on the role of *antemurale* myths in defending a territory against a perceived dangerous 'other'. Kolstø adapts the concept of *antemurale*, originally used in the medieval Catholic world to isolate oneself from non-Catholics, to the present day. *Antemurale* is often used by smaller or weak groups as a defensive strategy against potentially threatening neighbors by attaching themselves to a larger and more powerful group of which they claim to be a member. For example, Ukrainians and Belarusians present themselves as

members of European nations, while Russians are often seen as non-Europeans.

Chapter 6 has three aims. Firstly, it provides a summary of the literature on Russian nationalism. Secondly, it explains the historical development of Russian nationalism. Thirdly, it explains the transformation of Russian nationalism from a state-centered to an ethnocentric position.

Chapter 7 discusses the history of the St. George's ribbon events. Since 2005, the St. George ribbon has been used in Russia as a symbol of Soviet victory in the Second World War. The ribbon event has become an important social and political event with millions of participants in various activities. The main purpose of government-sponsored national symbols is to create opportunities around which people can develop a common political identity. In this respect, the St. George's ribbon campaign can be seen as a success. However, under Putin's presidency, the action largely began to serve as a sign of loyalty to central authority and has become increasingly politicized.

Chapter 8 analyzes the causes and consequences of the unification of the anti-Putin opposition. It considers the possible benefits and risks of alliances between political oppositions with wide ideological differences.

Chapter 9 and 10 focus on the annexation of Crimea in 2014. It discusses how the annexation was legitimized by a new nationalist rhetoric. This rhetoric was initially effective in legitimizing the annexation and raising Putin's popularity. But it then addresses the unrest that emerged as the war dragged on. However, presumably because the book was published earlier, it does not include any as-

assessment of the re-emergence of the Russian-Ukrainian war in 2022. Of course, this cannot be considered as a shortcoming. In fact, it gives us hope that a chapter on this issue will be included in future editions of the book.

Taken as a whole, the book provides a very satisfying overview of the instrumental uses of nationalism in post-Soviet countries. However, the fictional disconnects between the chapters slightly overshadow this positive aspect of the book. The sudden leaving behind of the historical background from chapter 3 onwards creates a problem in terms of the chronological integrity of the book. In fact, there is a similar problem among the following chapters. This problem, of course, derives from the fact that the book is a combination of different articles and book chapters. However,

this problem could have been overcome by expanding the framework of the introduction or adding a historical-sociological background chapter. Similar problems, albeit to a lesser extent, are apparent in all the following chapters. For example, in chapter 6, the first two aims of this chapter could easily have been made the subject of the introduction. This change could also have contributed to solving the above-mentioned problem of disconnection.

Nevertheless, this book provides a quite satisfying overview of the use of nationalism as a tool for gaining power and interests in post-Soviet countries including Russia. In this respect, it is a primary source for those interested in contemporary nationalism studies and those who wish to become proficient in this field.

The Declassification Engine: What History Reveals about America's Top Secrets

By Matthew Connelly

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Reviewed by Mehmet Ali Şengil, Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University

Researchers conducting investigations in the U.S. archives are aware of the immense scale of documents. Thanks to the ongoing and significant endeavor to declassify information in conjunction with the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act, new information arose about the U.S. role in coups worldwide. Matthew Connelly's study, *The Declassification Engine: What History Reveals about America's Top Secrets*, explores the intricacies of how this procedure is executed with delicate balances.



As a scholar specializing in international and global history, Connelly addresses the government's practice of concealing information and the substantial financial resources allocated to document storage. In addition, he discusses the obstacles associated with the process of declassifying documents and the specific categories of information that are deliberately concealed from public knowledge. The book has become even more pertinent in light of recent news stories regarding presidents and other individuals who have stored classified