

Course Title: Ethnicity and Nationalism

Course Code: CLE9014

Recommended Study Year: 2 or above

Mode of Study: Lecture – tutorial

Class Contact Hours: 2 hours lecture and 1 hour tutorial

Category in Major Programme: Core Curriculum Cluster Course

Cluster: Values, Cultures and Societies

Brief Course Description

A central goal of liberal arts education is to enable students to acquire international awareness and become a citizen of the world community, and political, social and cultural movements rooted in conceptions of ethnicity or nationhood have undeniably shaped, and is continuously shaping, the modern world that we live in. This course focuses on the role of ethnic communities and nations within the domestic politics of sovereign states. It will introduce students to concepts and definitions of ethnicity and nationalism, and explore the historical and contemporary basis for their development and significance. It will also examine some exemplar research that will guide us to understand these phenomena better. Conflicts generated by nationalist demands for political recognition, and how states deal with them, will be discussed. This course will conclude with an investigation into the controversial issue of intervention by other states and international organizations in ethnic conflicts within sovereign states.

Aims and Objectives

- Familiarize students with concepts that are usually contested in the analysis of ethnicity and nationalism by identifying and explaining rival understandings of collective identification and belonging
- Make students knowledgeable of the varieties of collectivities which claim to constitute “nations” and encourage them to examine the bases of such claims
- Encourage students to consider the idea of a nation as a conflict group and the range of political mechanisms available to the multi-ethnic state to regulate ethnic conflict
- Introduce students to the political and social implications of ethnic and national identification and solidarity in the international arena

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Define, identify and describe ethnic and national phenomena
2. Distinguish, outline and explain the variety of principles which lead individuals and groups to identify themselves as members of nations

3. Outline, compare and contrast the origins, features and history of particular national communities
4. Recall and illustrate familiarity with classical readings on ethnic consciousness and national identification, and demonstrate an ability to compare, contrast and assess the merits and deficiencies of the major theoretical perspectives in the field
5. Discuss the merits of the nation-state as a form of political organization, and critically describe and evaluate the ways in which ethnic and national groups have used it to pursue collective identity, autonomy and unity
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the issues surrounding the contemporary study of ethnicity, nation and ethnic-nationalism

Indicative Content

1. Introduction to basic concepts and definitions
What is an ethnic group or ethnies? How has the meaning of the term evolve? How is ethnicity related to culture, tradition, or race?
2. Ethnic and national identities at the dawn of modern nation-state formation
How far back through history does consciousness of common ethnic ties or particular national identities exist or persist? How are nations related to ethnic communities? How does an ethnic group become a nationality or nation? What are the signs for identifying an ethnic group? How are nations formed?
3. On becoming a nation
What are the characteristics that a nation must or should possess? In what sense is a nation a principle rather than a collection of characteristics? What was Chinese identity originally based on, and why and how did it change? How did nationalism arise and spread within European countries during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries?
4. Perspectives on nation-state formation
Is nationalism a modern principle of group solidarity? Is it a product of the industrial age in Europe? How far can “modern” nations be described as being related to “pre-modern” ethnic communities? Why is language a key feature of ethnic identity in modern societies? To what extent is nationalism a mass phenomenon and in what sense is it a process of state development?
5. Nationalism and the International System
How did nationalism spread outside Europe? How did the elite in the colonized parts of the world seek to deal with European domination through the use of nationalism? How does the formation of nation-states offer a solution to ethno-nationalist aspirations? What is the Marxist or class perspective towards “nationalities”?

6. Ethnic Nationalism and International Norms

Is acquiring territorial sovereignty the only means of protecting disaffected ethnic minorities? In what ways are secessionist or separatist attempts paths to the formation of nation-states? As an international norm, is state sovereignty biased against or favorable toward ethno-nationalists making secessionist claims against an existing state? Is international intervention ever justified in dealing with ethno-nationalist conflicts? If so, according to what international conventions or moral principles should these interventions be carried out?

7. Federalism versus secessionism: I) Czecho-Slovakia, II) Canada and Quebec

How do democracies deal with aspirations or problems of ethnic nationalism? What is federalism, and how effective is it as a constitutional mechanism for accommodating ethno-cultural diversity within states and forestalling secessionist demands? Are there other political arrangements that are as good or better in maintaining inter-ethnic peace?

8. Post-colonial ethnic nationalism: I) Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers; II) China and the Tibetan separatists

Is there any basis in international law or convention for secession or separatism, particularly with reference to post-colonial states? What is the so-called “Blood and Salt-Water Test” and how far is it applicable to actual or potential cases of secessionism or separatism in “third world” countries? What are the differences in the perceptions of ethnic majorities and minorities with regard to the degrees of autonomy to be allowed for ethnic minorities? How do ethnic minorities relate to their diasporas through the internet to defend or promote their group interests?

9. Polyethnic Norms and Civic Nationalism

Is polyethnicity on the rise everywhere? If so, why is that the case? What are the characteristics of civic nationalism? What should the ideal state of ethnic relations be in a modern nation-state?

Measurements of Learning Outcomes

Student performance in the course will be evaluated on the bases of active participation in class discussions; a knowledgeable and well-organized tutorial presentation; a focused, detailed and well-argued term paper; and two tests / assessments during the course which appraise the student’s overall knowledge of and ability to discuss key concepts, core readings and principal dilemmas relating to the study of ethnicity and nationalism. These will contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes (LOs) listed above.

Assessment

100% continuous assessment

Class Participation 15%

Assesses contributions to in-class debates and discussions, in which quality as well as quantity is important (measures LOs 1-6)

Since classes (except for assessments and presentations) are conducted in a roundtable seminar format, students will be encouraged to speak up. For this purpose, lecture and tutorial attendance is *compulsory*, and doing the relevant readings beforehand is *expected* for this course.

Two in-class assessments totaling 45%

First assessment 20%

Second assessment 25%

Assesses the overall knowledge of and ability to discuss key concepts and theoretical perspectives as well as core readings which relate to ethnicity and nationalism (measures LOs 1-4, 6)

Tutorial presentation 15%

Demonstrates the ability to present and defend key facts and arguments on a particular topic, based on one of the ethnic and national case studies covered in this course, or on a relevant case study of the student's own choosing, in a well-organized and logical manner (measures LOs 1-6)

The presentation topic must be approved by the instructor before preparation

Research Paper 25%

Demonstrates the ability to develop an appropriate research question related to one of the themes covered in this course and to analyze and discuss that question in a logical and clear manner and with proper referencing (measures LOs 1-6)

The research topic must be approved by the instructor before writing

References must be provided. No attempts at plagiarism will be tolerated

Required / essential readings (indicative) [On 3-hours reserve]

Selected chapters are drawn from these readings for discussions in class.

Ang, Ien: On Not Speaking Chinese: Living Between Asia and the West, London & New York: Routledge, 2003. [DS732 .A585 2001](#)

Coakley, John (ed.): Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict, London & Portland OR: Frank Cass, 2003. [GN496.T47 2003](#)

Brown, Michael E. (ed.): Ethnic Conflict and International Security, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993. [GN496.E838 1993](#)

Connor, Walter: The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Strategy, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984. Chapter 2, “The National Question from the Second International to the October Revolution,” pp. 28 – 42. GEC361/POL261.1

DeVotta, Neil: “The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Lost Quest for Separatism in Sri Lanka,” *Asian Survey*, 49(6): 1021-1051. GEC361/POL261.2

Henders, Susan J.: Territoriality, Asymmetry and Autonomy, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Chapter 7, “Central Tibet from the Sino-Tibetan Seventeen-Point agreement to the Tibet Autonomous Region,” pp. 163-202. GEC361/POL261.3

Hutchinson, John & Anthony Smith (eds.): Ethnicity, Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1996. GN495.6.E8845 1996

Hutchinson, John & Anthony Smith (eds.): Nationalism, Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1994. JC311 .N295 1994

Lee, Rachel C. and Sau-ling Cynthia Wong (ed.): Asian America.Net: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Cyberspace, London & New York: Routledge, 2003. T173.8 .A815 2003

Lehning, Percy (ed.): Theories of Secession, London & New York: Routledge, 1998. JC311 .K36 1996

Pecora, Vincent P. (ed.): Nations and Identities – Classic Readings, Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001. D247 .N38 2001

Sautman, Barry, and June Teufel Dreyer (eds.): Contemporary Tibet – Politics, Development and society in a Disputed Region, Armonk NY & London UK: M. E. Sharpe, 2006. DS786 .C64 2006

Taras, Ray & Rajat Ganguly (eds.): Understanding Ethnic Conflict: The International Dimension, New York: Longman, 3rd edition (updated), 2007. GN496 .T37 2008

Rudolph, Joseph: Politics and ethnicity: a comparative study, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. GN495.6 .R83 2006

Recommended / supplementary readings (indicative)

Smith, Anthony: Nationalism and Modernism, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. (This is a highly recommended survey of theories of nations and nationalisms.)

Anderson, Benedict: Imagined Communities, London: New Verso, 2nd edition, 2006. JC311 .A656 1991

Connor, Walter: The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Strategy, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984.

Finley, Andrew: Governing Ethnic Conflict: Consociation, Identity and the Price of Peace (Routledge Studies in Peace and Conflict Resolution), London & New York: Routledge, 2010.

Gellner, Ernest: Nations and Nationalism, Oxford and Malden: Blackwell, 2nd edition, 2006. [JC311 .G48 1983](#)

Hobsbawn, Eric: Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. [JC311 .H577 1992](#)

Newman, Saul: Ethnoregional Conflict in Democracies: Mostly Ballots, Rarely Bullets, Westport & London: Greenwood Press, 1996. [JC311.N492 1996](#)

Keating, Michael: Nations Against the State: the New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2nd edition, 2002. [JC311 .K36 1996](#)

Safran, William (ed.): Nationalism and Ethnoregional Identities in China (Routledge Studies in Nationalism and Ethnicity), Abingdon & New York: Routledge, 1998. [DS730 .N33 1998](#)

Suny, Ronald Grigor: The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution and the Collapse of the Soviet Union, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993. **[electronic resource]**

Wang, Lixiong and Tsering Shakya: The Struggle for Tibet, London & New York: Verso, 2009.

Weber, Eugen: Peasants into Frenchmen: the Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976. [HD1536.F5 W434 1976](#)

民族與民族主義 = A typology of nationalism / 厄內斯特·蓋爾納著；韓紅譯 北京：中央編譯出版社，2002. [JC311 .G4812 2002](#)

Important Notes:

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3* hours of class contact and 6* hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.

Assessment Rubrics

Participation (15%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	Below Standard
Class attendance and participation	Class attendance is regular and student speaks up regularly and enthusiastically	Class attendance is regular and student speaks up now and then	Class attendance is quite regular but student participates only when asked by the instructor	Class attendance is erratic and participation is nil or almost nil
9%	9 marks	6 marks	3 marks	0-1 marks
Articulateness	Expression of ideas or opinions consistently factually accurate, logical and clear	Expression of ideas or opinions generally factually accurate, logical and clear. Lapses rare and minor in nature.	Expression of ideas or opinions generally factually accurate, logical and clear, but with a number of minor lapses	Ideas or opinions not expressed logically, and characterized by significant factual inaccuracies and lack of clarity
6%	6 marks	4 marks	2 marks	0-1 marks

First class assessment (20%)

Criteria	Excellent	Proficient	Meets Minimum Standard	Below Standard
Comprehension of all the relevant concepts.	Demonstrates deep insightful level of understanding	Demonstrates good surface level of understanding	Demonstrates adequate level of surface understanding	Demonstrates inadequate level of understanding
10%	10 marks	7 marks	4 marks	0-2 marks

Application of concepts to the topic	Appropriate concepts all applied correctly, to provide in-depth analysis and elaboration to all aspects of the topic	Appropriate concepts correctly applied, to provide analysis to all important aspects of the topic	Appropriate concepts correctly applied for the most part, to provide analysis to all important aspects of the topic	Concepts not applied, or generally applied inappropriately or incorrectly; important aspects of the topic unaddressed
10%	10 marks	7 marks	4 marks	0-2 marks

Second class assessment (25%)

Criteria	Excellent	Proficient	Meets Minimum Standard	Below Standard
Comprehension of all the relevant concepts.	Demonstrates deep insightful level of understanding	Demonstrates good surface level of understanding	Demonstrates adequate level of surface understanding	Demonstrates inadequate level of understanding
12.5%	12.5 marks	9 marks	6 marks	0-3 marks
Application of concepts to the topic	Appropriate concepts all applied correctly, to provide in-depth analysis and elaboration to all aspects of the topic	Appropriate concepts correctly applied, to provide analysis to all important aspects of the topic	Appropriate concepts correctly applied for the most part, to provide analysis to all important aspects of the topic	Concepts not applied, or generally applied inappropriately or incorrectly; important aspects of the topic unaddressed
12.5%	12.5 marks	9 marks	6 marks	0-3 marks

Presentation (15%)

Category	Excellent	Fair	Below Standard
Conceptual understanding of subject matter	Cover a good range of relevant concepts/theories Important ideas pertinent to the topic skillfully applied	Concepts/theories and important ideas pertinent to the topic accurately covered	Concepts/theories and important ideas pertinent to the topic not accurately covered
4%	4 marks	2 marks	0-1 mark
Analysis of Issues	Thoroughly interpret and evaluate information Comprehensively analyze and synthesize issues from multiple perspectives	Offered information with some interpretation or evaluation Basic analysis or synthesis from two perspectives	List information without interpretation or evaluation Superficially analyze or synthesize the issue Single perspective discussed
4%	4 marks	2 marks	0-1 mark
Integration of sources and evidence	Empirical evidence or information (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) highly relevant	Empirical evidence or information (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) generally relevant	Much of Information included not relevant, and inadequate to support topic. Some information inaccurate or unverifiable
4%	4 marks	2 marks	0-1 mark
Appropriate time allocation and pace	Allocated and managed time appropriately and effectively Appropriate pace	Marginally long or short but uses time reasonably effectively Reasonable pace	Significantly too short or too long and did not use time effectively Pace is significantly too fast or too slow
3%	3 marks	2 marks	0-1 mark

Research-paper (25%)

Category	Excellent	Proficient	Meets Minimum Standard	Below Standard
Research Question	Wrote clear, creative, and interesting questions which fit topic.	Wrote clear questions which fit topic.	Wrote some questions which did not fit topic.	Wrote many questions which did not fit topics
6%	6 marks	4 marks	2 marks	0-1 marks
Argument	Arguments both well supported and genuinely compared to conflicting explanations	Main arguments valid, systematic, and well supported	Some arguments valid and well supported, some not	Weak, invalid, or no argument, perhaps a simple assertion
7%	7 marks	5 marks	3 marks	0-2 marks
Use of Data or Evidence	Fully exploits richness of data / evidence / ideas, which are sufficiently persuasive	Feasible evidence appropriately selected and not over-interpreted	Some appropriate but uneven use of evidence	Draws on little or no evidence, mostly relies on assertions or opinions, or evidence not clearly presented
6%	6 marks	4 marks	2 marks	0-1 marks
Organization and Writing	Structure enhances the argument, with strong sections and seamless flow Virtually no English error.	Structure supports the argument, and clearly ordered sections fit together well. Some minor English errors.	Structure of inconsistent quality, with redundancies or disconnections. Frequent English errors.	Needs significant reorganization English errors significantly impair readability.
6%	6 marks	4 marks	2 marks	0-1 marks