



Mahidol University  
International College

## ICIR 233 Identity Politics and Social Movements in Asia

### Course Description & Aims:

This course outlines theories on identity and social movements in order to understand contemporary identity politics in Asia. Various identity issues are covered, with a particular focus on the emergence of ethnic majorities and minorities. The course also discusses theories on intersectionality of gender, ethnic, class and religious identities. The course also looks into the mobilization of some identity groups into social and political movements.

Ethnicity in relationship to language, religion, 'race', and culture. Ethnic groups in Southeast Asia. Minorities and majorities in the various Southeast Asian states. Political and cultural issues. The development of national identity. Students will assess; analyze; examine; memory; ethnic groups; minorities in Asia.

Lecturer: Dr. Marja-Leena Heikkila-Horn

Office number 2114, office hours Monday-Thursday 8.00-10.00

marjaleena.hei@mahidol.ac.th

### Assessment

Class attendance/participation	10%
Test on theories and concepts 1	10%
Midterm exam paper	20%
Test on theories and concept 2	10%
Film Review	10%
Case studies/ student presentations	20%
Final exam paper	20%

### Course Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. Describe different theories on identity
2. Identify different types of identity politics
3. Recognize the mechanisms that mobilize groups
4. Understand form of identity politics and social movements

<b>Topic No.</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	Overview on Asia
	Diversity of Asia
2	What is an ethnic identity based on?
	Theories of origins of ethnic thinking
3	Creation of majorities and minorities
	Theories of Benedict Anderson
4	Culturally constructed identities and territorial identities
	Theories on identities
5	Theories on imagined communities and invented traditions
	Theories of Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm
6	Primordialism and instrumentalizing identities
	Theories on identities
7	Mobilizations of ethnic groups
	Political and economic background
8	Intersectionality of gender, class and identity
	Gender identities, class identities
9	Politicization of identities and non-politicized identities
	Case studies
10	Mobilizing for ethnic-political and gender rights
	Case studies
11	Separatism, autonomy and civil wars in Asia
	Case studies
12	Summary and review
	Final exams

### **Assessment Methods & Criteria**

1. Class attendance/participation 10%  
Students need to have full attention and participate in the discussion.
2. Test on theories and concepts 1 10%  
Students will be given an in-class-examination with short-answer questions.
3. Midterm exam paper 20%  
Take-home essay a paper to apply theories and concepts on case studies.
4. Test on theories and concept 2 10%  
Students will be given an in-class-examination with short-answer questions.
5. Film Review 10%  
Students will watch a film and write a film review in the light of the readings
6. Case studies/ student presentations 20%  
Student will choose a topic to write a take-home essay about and present their paper in the class to their paper in the form of a power-point and explaining which theoretical approach they are going to use.
7. Final exam paper 20%  
The presentation as an academic paper with proper foot/end-noting and referencing, based on the literature decided by the lecturer together with the student.

## Overview on Asia and Ethnic Diversity of Asia

**Topic description:** This week students will be introduced to the course outline, course requirements, and their expected input. Basic concepts are defined; central issues outlined; and critical tensions within the study introduced and ethnic diversity in Asia examined.

**Expected learning outcomes:** Understand the diversity of populations in Asia.

### **Readings and activities:**

- Mackerras, Colin (2003) Introduction pp. 1-14, Mackerras, Colin (ed) *Ethnicity in Asia*. Routledge. London.
- In-class discussion about the diversity in Asia and how it plays in the daily life

## What is an Ethnic Identity based on? Theories of Origins of Ethnic Categorization

**Topic description:** This week the central theories by Eriksen, Brass and Anthony D. Smith will be explored.

**Expected learning outcomes:** Describe different theories on identity, their formations, central foundations and principles for collective identity formations.

### **Readings and activities:**

- Brass, Paul (1991) *Ethnic Groups and Ethnic Identity Formation* pp. 85-90, Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (1996) *Oxford Readers Ethnicity*, OUP, Oxford.
- Eriksen Thomas Hylland (2010) *Ethnicity, race and nation* pp. 46-53, Montserrat, Guiberanau and John Rex (2010) *The Ethnicity Reader*. CUP, Cambridge.
- Smith, Anthony D. (1996) *Chosen Peoples* pp. 189-197, Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (1996) *Oxford Readers Ethnicity*, OUP, Oxford.
- In-class discussion about the central theories and how they apply to Asia.

## Creation of Majorities and Minorities

**Topic description:** This week the central theories by Benedict Anderson on the creation of majorities and minorities will be explored.

**Expected learning outcomes:** Describe the different processes for the creation of majorities and minorities in states and some of the effects this from a modern perspective.

### **Readings and activities:**

- Anderson, Benedict (1999) *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the world*, Chapter 12, *Majorities and Minorities* pp. 318-329. Verso Books, London.
- In-class discussion about the central theories and how they apply to Asia.

## Culturally Constructed Identities and Territorial Identities

**Topic description:** This week the central theories on culturally constructed identities and territorial identities will be explored.

**Expected learning outcomes:** Describe and analyze the construction of identity from multiple perspectives. How identity forms come to be, the processes and inputs that build the foundations of collective identity from multiple perspectives.

**Readings and activities:**

- Brass, Paul (1994) *Elite Competition and Nation-Formation* (pp.83-89) Hutchinson John and Anthony D. Smith (1994) *Oxford Readers Nationalism*. OUP, Oxford.
- Eriksen Thomas Hylland (2010) *Ethnicity, race and nation* pp. 46-53, Montserrat, Guiberanau and John Rex (2010) *The Ethnicity Reader*. CUP, Cambridge.
- In-class discussion about the central theories and how they apply to Asia.

**Theories on Imagined Communities and Invented Traditions**

**Topic description:** Theories on imagined communities and invented traditions by Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm will be explored.

**Expected learning outcomes:** Describe and analyze perspectives on the creation of national identities, the use of symbolic traditions to construct narratives of nationhood, citizenship and belonging to national community.

**Readings and activities:**

- Anderson Benedict (1994) *Imagined Communities* pp 89-96, Hutchinson John and Anthony D. Smith (1994) *Oxford Readers Nationalism*. OUP, Oxford.
- Hobsbawm, Eric the Nation as Invented Tradition pp. 76-83, Hutchinson John and Anthony D. Smith (1994) *Oxford Readers Nationalism*. OUP, Oxford.
- In-class discussion about the central theories and how they apply to Asia.

**Primordialism and Instrumentalizing Identities**

**Topic description:** General theories by Brass, Anthony D. Smith and James C. Scott on primordialism and instrumentalizing identities will be explored.

**Expected learning outcomes:** Describe and analyze different origins and formations of identity. How resistance to state constructed identity formats takes place and the problems with homogenization of large societies.

**Readings and activities:**

- Brass, Paul (1994) *Elite Competition and Nation-Formation* (pp.83-89) Hutchinson John and Anthony D. Smith (1994) *Oxford Readers Nationalism*. OUP, Oxford.
- Scott, James C (2009) *The Art of Not Being Governed. An Anarchist History of Uplands Southeast Asia*. Chapter 7, Ethnogenesis. A radical Constructionist Case, pp. 238-282. Yale UP, Yale.
- In-class discussion about the central theories and how they apply to Asia.

**Mobilizations of Ethnic Groups with Political and Economic Background in Focus**

**Topic description:** General theories on mobilizations of ethnic groups with focus on political and economic backgrounds will be explored

**Expected learning outcomes:** Identify different types of identity politics, Recognize the mechanisms that mobilize groups.

**Readings and activities:**

- Lintner, Bertil (2003) *Myanmar/Burma*, pp. 174-194, Mackerras, Colin (ed) (2003) *Ethnicity in Asia*. Routledge. London.

- Scott, James C (2009) *The Art of Not Being Governed. An Anarchist History of Uplands Southeast Asia*. Chapter 7, Ethnogenesis. A radical Constructionist Case, pp. 238-282. Yale UP, Yale.
- In-class discussion about the central theories and how they apply to Asia.

### **Intersectionality of Gender, Class and Identity-Gender Identities and Class Identities**

**Topic description:** general theories on intersectionality of gender, class and identity will be explored with additional perspectives on intersectionality of gender identities and class identities.

**Expected learning outcomes:** Identify different types of identity politics, recognize various methods and mechanisms used that mobilize groups.

#### **Readings and activities:**

- Different but Not Divided – Women’s Perspectives on Intersectionality, Asia-Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, APWLDADMIN (online)
- Floya Anthias and Niras Yuval-Davis (1996) Women and the Nation-State, pp. 312-316, Hutchinson John and Anthony D. Smith (1994) *Oxford Readers Nationalism*. OUP, Oxford.
- Kandiyoti, Deniz (1996) Women, Ethnicity and Nationalism. Pp. 311-316, Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (1996) *Oxford Readers Ethnicity*, OUP, Oxford.
- Where is Ethnicity? Intersectionality in the Chinese Feminist Movement. IAPS Dialogue: Online Magazine of the Institute of Asia Pacific Studies. University of Nottingham.
- In-class discussion about the central theories and how they apply to Asia.

### **Politicization of Identities and Non-Politicized Identities**

**Topic description:** Theories and case studies of politicization of identities and non-politicized identities will be explored and discussed

**Expected learning outcomes:** Identify and analyze how ethnic and identity groups are mobilized along and for political motivations.

#### **Readings and activities:**

- Student presentations. Students will choose the readings for their presentation in discussion with the instructor.

### **Mobilizing for Ethno-political and Gender Rights**

**Topic description:** Theories and practical case studies on mobilizing for ethno-political and gender rights will be explored and discussed.

**Expected learning outcomes:** Identify and analyze different types of identity politics and how they intersect with gender in the formation of rights.

#### **Readings and activities:**

Student presentations. Student presentations. Students will choose the readings for their presentation in discussion with the instructor.

### **Separatism, Autonomy and Civil Wars in Asia**

**Topic description:** Theories and practical examples and case studies of separatism, autonomy and civil wars in Asia will be explored, analyzed and discussed

**Expected learning outcomes:** Understand form of identity politics and social movements and its impact on civil conflict in Asia.

**Readings and activities:**

- Miller, Michelle Ann (2012) The Problem of Armed Separatism; Is Autonomy the Answer? pp. 1-16, Miller, Michelle Ann (ed) (2012) *Autonomy and Armed Separatism in South and Southeast Asia*, ISEAS, Singapore.
- McCargo, Duncan (2012) Southern Thailand: The Trouble with Autonomy pp. 217-235
- Miller, Michelle Ann (ed) (2012) *Autonomy and Armed Separatism in South and Southeast Asia*, ISEAS, Singapore.
- Student presentations and a general discussion on the situation in the region.

**Summary and Review**

**Topic description:** Summary and review. Final papers.

**Expected learning outcomes:** Describe different theories on identity, identify different types of identity politics, Recognize the mechanisms that mobilize groups, Understand form of identity politics and social movements.

**Readings and activities:**

- Anderson, Benedict (2010) The nation and the origins of national consciousness, pp. 56-63, Guibernau, Monserrat and John Rex (Eds) (2010) *The Ethnicity Reader. Nationalism, Multiculturalism & Migration*. Polity Press. Cambridge.
- Anderson Benedict (1998) *The Spectre of Comparisons: nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*. Chapter 12 Majorities and minorities. Verso Books, London.
- Eriksen, Thomas Hylland (2010) Ethnicity, race and nation, pp. 46-53 Guibernau,
- Monserrat and John Rex (Eds) (2010) *The Ethnicity Reader. Nationalism, Multiculturalism & Migration*. Polity Press. Cambridge.
- Ford, Michele (2013) Men and Masculinities in Southeast Asia. Routledge. Guibernau, Monserrat and John Rex (Eds) (2010) *The Ethnicity Reader. Nationalism, Multiculturalism & Migration*. Polity Press. Cambridge.
- Harrison, Rachel V. and Peter A. Jackson (2010) The Ambiguous Allure of the West. Traces of the Colonial in Thailand. Hong Kong University Press. Hong Kong.
- Hoffstaedter, Gerhard (2011) Modern Muslim Identities. Negotiating Religion and Ethnicity in Malaysia. NIAS. Copenhagen
- Ooi Keat Gin & Volker Grabowsky (2017) Ethnic and Religious Identities and Integration in Southeast Asia. Silkworm, Chiang Mai.
- Sophorntavy Vorng (2017) A Meeting of Masks. Status, power and hierarchy in Bangkok. NIAS. Copenhagen.
- Van Roy, Edward (2017) Siamese Melting Pot. Ethnic minorities in the Making of Bangkok. ISEAS. Singapore.