

**Course title: Nation, State, Ethnicity and Transnational Communities in insular Southeast Asia**

**Course Number:**

**Meeting Times:** Mondays from 2:10-4pm in room 501A IAB.

**Instructor: Saskia Schaefer**

**Office Hours:**

**Email Address: [ss4605@columbia.edu](mailto:ss4605@columbia.edu)**

**Credits: 3**

**Prerequisites: This course requires no specific background knowledge**

**Course description:**

This course introduces students to concepts of the nation, the state, ethnicity, and transnational communities with examples from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, as well as the Southern Philippines and Southern Thailand. Drawing on theoretical approaches as well as ethnographic work, this interdisciplinary course familiarizes students with concepts of nation, state, loyalties and communities. In the first part of the course we look at concepts of nationalism, the state, and ethnicity. In the second part, we examine the national narratives and prevalent identities in five sessions each dedicated to one of the above-mentioned countries. In the third part of the course, we turn our view to transnational movements and organizations such as the Tablighi Jama'at and various Islamic women's rights groups to understand how communities transcend national boundaries.

In addition to familiarizing themselves with the concepts of nation, state, and ethnicity and insular Southeast Asia, students will practice extricating the main arguments from texts and presenting them to others as well as conducting their own research on primary sources in the form of local newspapers.

Students are expected to actively participate in the course in the form of contributing short discussion postings on Courseworks and giving two presentations of the readings throughout the course.

## **Course Requirements and Grading**

### **Class Attendance and Participation (20% of the final grade):**

*Attendance and participation (10%):* Students are expected to read the assigned texts and conduct the expected own research before class. Students are expected to read and think seriously and critically, and to discuss their ideas in class. Students will be awarded marks for participating actively in seminars (not just attending). Attendance will be recorded; more than two absences will lower a student's final grade.

*Discussion Postings (10%):* In order facilitate our discussions and engage with each other's views, each week, students are expected to post brief reflections, comments or questions about each week's readings and topic. Students are expected to write at least 6 pages of postings throughout the semester and may spread these pages according to their own time schedules (i.e. either write each one page for six of the sessions or write three pages on two sessions each, etc.). It is highly recommended to do the postings early on to receive feedback. All postings must be submitted two days before class at 6 pm so that everyone has time to read them. Posts which are not uploaded by that time cannot be counted. It is expected that students will have read the posts and be able to discuss them. More information will be provided the first day of class.

### **Short Presentations of the Readings (40% of the final grade)**

Students are expected to introduce the readings for two sessions throughout the course. They are asked to summarize the main arguments and to relate the texts to the previous sessions. Each of the two presentations counts 20% towards the final grade. Presentations will be graded according to the same criteria as the final research papers (see below).

### **Final Research Paper or Independent Study (40% of the final grade)**

Students are expected to write a 15-20 page policy or research paper that focuses on a specific issue relating to the course topic. Topics will be determined in close consultation with the instructor. Final papers are due one week following the last day of class. Further guidelines will be provided during class.

Papers will be graded based on the substance of the paper, originality, topic appropriateness, research thoroughness and presentation of the material. Research and writing is an essential part of the learning process and a vital medium through which students demonstrate their understanding of a subject. Including own library- as well as internet research in addition to

texts reads in class is highly encouraged. Quality academic writing usually contains the following attributes:

- Arguments supported by reference to secondary and, if possible, primary material
- Adequate range of sources
- Central question or issue clearly defined and answered
- Discussion of key issues and relevant narrative
- Logical flow of ideas and arguments
- Evidence of creative thought and articulation of own ideas
- Conclusions supported by evidence and argument
- Argument and conclusions linked to larger debates in relevant literatures
- Contains adequate introduction and conclusion
- Fluent and succinct writing
- Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Neat presentation
- Full bibliography of references cited

Papers should neither only summarize other people's views nor offer only descriptive accounts of events or points but additionally demonstrate students' own understanding of the question or issue. Papers should go beyond description, be original and advance a particular argument, supported by evidence, leading to a conclusion or demonstrating the need for further research. Late submissions will result in grade reduction for a full-mark per day (e.g. an "A" will be reduced to "B" if submission is one day late).

*Grading Standards for the Paper:*

A: The argument is clearly articulated and logically developed, using relevant evidence. The research is of high quality, cleverly ordered to support the argument with an original and creative synthesis of materials and displaying understanding of wider issues. The presentation is of high standard.

B: The argument is well proposed but the structure is not fully developed. The research is quite extensive but sources are not fully utilized which limits the ability to be creative and deal with a full range of issues. The presentation is solid but can be improved.

C: The argument is satisfactory, with some limitations, but the structure is not well thought out. The research used is adequate, but insufficient to develop fully the argument or display much originality. The presentation is adequate and could be improved.

D: While the essay displays a basic understanding of the subject, the argument lacks coherence and logical development. The research is basic and the use of evidence does not sufficiently support the argument nor display originality or understanding of wider issues. The presentation is not of sufficient standard.

F: The presentation is well below acceptable standard. The essay is incoherent with glaring misunderstandings.

## **Academic Integrity Statement**

The School of International & Public Affairs does not tolerate cheating and/or plagiarism in any form. Those students who violate the Code of Academic & Professional Conduct will be subject to the Dean's Disciplinary Procedures. Cut and paste the following link into your browser to view the Code of Academic & Professional Conduct online.

[http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources\\_services/student\\_affairs/academic\\_policies/deans\\_discipline\\_policy.html](http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/deans_discipline_policy.html)

Please familiarize yourself with the proper methods of citation and attribution. The School provides some useful resources online; we strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with these various styles before conducting your research:

[http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources\\_services/student\\_affairs/academic\\_policies/code\\_of\\_conduct.html](http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/code_of_conduct.html)

Violations of the Code of Academic & Professional Conduct should be reported to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

## **Reading Material:**

All reading material apart from full books will be available on Courseworks. The following books are on reserve for this course:

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities* (1983). Verso.

Appadurai, Arjun (2007): *The Fear of Small Numbers*. Duke University Press.

Barr, Michael D. and Zlatko Skrbis (2008). *Constructing Singapore: Elitism, Ethnicity, and the Nation-Building Project*. NIAS Press.

Hudson, Chris (2013): *Beyond the Singapore Girl: Discourses of Gender and Nation in Singapore*. NIAS Press.

Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (1996) (eds). *Ethnicity*. Oxford University Press.

Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (1994) (eds). *Nationalism*. Oxford University Press.

Noor, Farish (2012): *Islam on the Move: The Tablighi Jama'at in Southeast Asia*. Amsterdam University Press.

Kua Kia Soong (2007): *Declassified Documents on the Malaysian Riots of 1969*. SUARAM.

## **Week 1: General Introduction**

General overview of the course; students meet each other present their own academic and professional backgrounds, interests and fields of expertise.

- Bruinessen, Martin van (2011): What happened to the smiling face of Indonesian Islam? Muslim intellectualism and the conservative turn in post-Suharto Indonesia, Working paper No. 222, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore, 6 January (40 pages).
- Emmerson, Donald K. (1984): "Southeast Asia": What's in a name? *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 15, pp 1-21.
- Fealy, Greg; Virginia Hooker and Sally White (2006): *Indonesia* in: Fealy, Greg; Virginia Hooker: *Voices of Islam in Southeast Asia*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, pp 39-50.
- Funston, John (2006): *Malaysia* in: Fealy, Greg; Virginia Hooker: *Voices of Islam in Southeast Asia*, pp 51-61.

## **Week 2: Concepts of the Nation**

Theoretical discussion of concepts of the nation

- Renan, Ernest (1995): What is a Nation? in Omar Dahbour and Micheline R. Ishay (eds): *The Nationalism Reader*. Humanities Press, 143-155.
- Gellner, Ernest (1983): *Nations and Nationalism*. Cornell University Press 1-18.
- Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (1994). *Nationalism*. Oxford UP, Introduction, Chapters 1-7 (50 pages).

## **Week 3: Concepts of Ethnicity**

Theoretical discussions of concepts of ethnicity

- Barth, Frederik: "Introduction," in Frederik Barth, ed. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969), 9-38.
- Brubaker, Roger, "Ethnicity Without Groups" *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* XLIII.2 (2002): 163-189.
- Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (1996). *Ethnicity*. Oxford UP Introduction, Chapters 1-4.

#### **Week 4: Constructivist Perspectives on communities**

Indonesia as an example of a constructed community along national lines

- Anderson, Benedict (1983): *Imagined Communities*. Verso.

#### **Week 5: Groups and the Politics of Numbers**

Notions of majority and minority as part of debates on nationalism and ethnicity

- Appadurai, Arjun (2007): *The Fear of Small Numbers*. Duke University Press.

#### **Week 6: Indonesia**

Colonialism, nationalism, and religion in the case of Indonesia

- Laffan, Michael (2004): *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma Below the Winds*. Routledge. Introduction.
- Ricklefs, Merle (1993): *A History of Modern Indonesia*. Stanford University Press. Chapters 4-5 (pp 151-212).

#### **Week 7: Malaysia**

Official writing of history versus academic historical research, own primary research

This week, each student is expected to conduct research on the Malaysian riots in 1969 and to bring a piece of material with them to class. This may be a newspaper article from a local newspaper or an academic approach to the topic. Students are asked to address the following

questions: 1) what kind of source is it, in what context was it published, and how did you find it? 2) What are the main points conveyed in this source? 3) Why did you choose this article and how can you relate it to the assigned reading?

- Holst, Frederik (2012): *Ethnicization and Identity Construction in Malaysia*. New York: Routledge. 2012. Chapter 3 (pp 31-61).
- Kua Kia Soong (2007): *Declassified Documents on the Malaysian Riots of 1969*. SUARAM.
- Local Malaysian Newspapers and news sites: The New Straits Times, The Star Online, The Nut Graph, Malaysia Today.

### **Week 8: Singapore**

Issues of multiculturalism and gender in relation to the construction of the nation state

- Barr, Michael D. and Zlatko Skrbis (2008). *Constructing Singapore: Elitism, Ethnicity, and the Nation-Building Project*. NIAS Press. **OR** Hudson, Chris (2013): *Beyond the Singapore Girl: Discourses of Gender and Nation in Singapore*. NIAS Press.
- Chua Beng Huat (1995): *Communitarian ideology and democracy in Singapore*. Routledge. Introduction, Chapters 1 & 5 (pp1-39; 101-123).
- Funston, John (2006): *Singapore* in Fealy, Greg; Virginia Hooker: *Voices of Islam in Southeast Asia*, pp 71-76.

### **Week 9: The Southern Philippines and Southern Thailand**

Ethnicity, religion, violence, and separatist movements

- Collier, Kit (2006): *The Philippines* in Fealy, Greg; Virginia Hooker: *Voices of Islam in Southeast Asia*: pp 63-70.
- Blanchetti-Revelli, Lanfranco. 2003. Moro, Muslim or Filipino? Cultural Citizenship as Practice and Process. In *Cultural Citizenship in Island Southeast Asia: Nation and Belonging in the Hinterlands*. Renato Rosaldo, ed. Pp. 44-75. University of California Press.

- McCargo, Duncan (2008): What's Really Happening in Southern Thailand? Paper prepared for ISEAS Regional Forum, Singapore, 8 January 2008.  
<http://www.polis.leeds.ac.uk/assets/files/thaipol/mccargo-iseas-forum-2008-s-thailand.pdf>

### **Week 10: The Tablighi Jama'at as a transnational religious community**

A religiously framed example of transnational senses of belonging and practices

- Noor, Farish (2012): Islam on the Move: The Tablighi Jama'at in Southeast Asia. Amsterdam University Press.

### **Week 11: The International Islamic Women's Rights Movement**

A politically framed example of transnational senses of belonging and practices

- Derichs, Claudia: Transnational Women's Movements and Networking: The Case of Musawah for Equality in the Family. Gender Technology and Development November 2010 vol. 14 no. 3, 405-412.

Students will conduct their own research on the international character of Islamic women's rights movements. Please choose, print and read at least three articles, press releases or interviews and be ready to summarize and discuss them in class. Address the following questions in your short summaries: Why did you choose this article? What kind of source is it? How can you relate these sources to the text read for the previous class and to the questions of transnational movement of people and ideas? Websites for the search of primary sources: <http://www.qantara.de>; <http://www.sistersinislam.org.my>; <http://www.wluml.org/>.

### **Week 12: Group discussion of student's planned research papers**

In this session, students will discuss their research questions and practice peer advising.

### **Week 13: General concluding session**

In the final session, we tie together loose ends and address remaining questions. Based on students' specific interests, recommendations for further readings are provided.

For this class, students are expected to reflect on and discuss what they have learned in the course and how it relates to their studies and careers. Please go through all your notes for this class and bring them so we can discuss any remaining questions.