

ETHNICITY AND SOCIAL IDENTITY IN SRI LANKA

Intercollegiate Sri Lanka Education Program (ISLE) Program

Suggested US semester credit hours: 4

Contact Hours: 60

Course Code: SO282-04 and AN282-04

Course Length: Semester

Delivery method: Face to Face

Language of Instruction: English

Suggested cross-listings: Sociology; Anthropology

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to Sri Lanka society through exploration of three primary bases of personal and social identity, namely caste, social class and ethnicity. One of the key sociological issues to be explored in this course is why ethnicity is more important than either caste or social class in shaping group processes, political dynamics and social conflict in contemporary Sri Lanka. The war between the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE ended in May 2009 but the ethnic divide and the resulting tensions are continuing in different ways. In the post-war era instead of promoting ethnic reconciliation as such, celebration of the war victory, militarization and economic development have been aggressively pursued by the state, disregarding the political demands from minority communities. In this course the upsurge in ethnicity and nationalism is viewed not as a uniquely Sri Lankan phenomenon, but a worldwide process in some ways contrary to the expected trajectory of globalization. Will ethnicity remain as important as before in post-war Sri Lanka? In the absence of an ethnicized war and the resulting instrumentalization of ethnicity by armed actors, will other identities like broader citizenship, gender, social class and even caste acquire a greater significance than before? These are some of the new questions that will be addressed in this course

COURSE DELIVERY

1. Lectures/Seminars
2. Assigned Readings
3. A Field Visit

EVALUATION METHODS

The final course grade will be calculated as follows:

- Class participation & quizzes =20%
- Report on the field visit =30%
- Term Paper =50%

ATTENDANCE

COURSE SYLLABUS

Students studying on an IFSA program are required to attend all regularly scheduled classes, studios, recitations, workshops and laboratory sessions. Failure to attend classes may result in a loss of credit and a fail on your transcript. The specific application of the attendance guidelines is at the instructor's discretion. Lateness or absence can affect the student's grade.

COURSE OUTLINE

Session	Topics	Readings, viewings
1	Introduction to the Course	Silva, Niluka 2002 Introduction. In <i>The Hybrid Island: culture crossings and the invention of identity in Sri Lanka</i> . Ed. Niluka Silva. Colombo: Social Scientists Association. Pp. I-vii.
2	Caste	Silva, K.T. 2006 Names, Identities and Distinctions in Sinhala Society: Intergenerational Changes in Names of Individuals in a Kandyan Village. In J.C. Holt and P.B. Meegaskumbura eds. <u>Identity and Difference</u> . Kandy: Isle Program, pp. 49-80. Silva, K.T., Sivapragasam, P.P. & Thanges, P. 2009 Casteless or Caste-blind? Dynamics of Concealed Caste Discrimination, Social Exclusion and Protest in Sri Lanka. Colombo: Kumaran Book House, Read Chapters 1 and 2. pp. 1-28.
3	Social Class	Jayawardena, K. 1983 Aspects of class and ethnic consciousness in Sri Lanka. <i>Development and Change</i> 14: 1-18. Kandiah, Tiru 1983 Kaduwa: power and the English language weapon in Sri Lanka. <i>Kaduwa</i> 1: 5-12. Kannangara, A.P. 2011 A survey of social change in an imperial regime. Colombo: Vijitha Yapa Publications. Read Chapter 3: Emergence of an English educated class, pp. 27-48.
4	Ethnicity	Wimmer, Andreas 2008 The making and unmaking of ethnic boundaries: a multilevel process. <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 113 (4): 970-1022. Hollinger, David A. 2008 Obama, Blackness, and Postethnic America: The Obama candidacy challenges our notions of identity politics. <i>The Chronicle of Higher Education</i> , February 29, 2008

COURSE SYLLABUS

5	Sinhala nationalism	<p>De Silva, K.M. 2011 Sri Lanka: national identity and the impact of colonialism. In J.C. Holt ed. <u>Sri Lanka reader</u>. Durham: Duke University Press. pp. 135-151.</p> <p>De Votta, Neil. 2007 Sinhalese Buddhist Nationalist Ideology. Washington, DC.: East West Centre. Read pp. 1-16.</p>
6	The Rise of Bodu Bala Sena	<p>Silva, K.T. 2013 Globalization, existential insecurities and interrogating religion in a neo-Buddhist nationalist movement in Sri Lanka. Paper presented in the Conference on Religion and the Politics of Development: Priests, Potentates and 'Progress' 28-29 August 2013, organised by Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore</p> <p>Colombo Telegraph 2013 Civil Society Organizations Condemn Anti-Muslim Rhetoric and Attacks. Colombo Telegraph, February 15, 2013</p>
7	Field Trip	
8	Muslim Identity	<p>Fazeeha, A. 2012 To go or not to go: struggle for belonging among second generation Muslim IDPs in Kalpitiya in Puttlam district in the context of post war resettlement. In Herath, D. and Silva, K.T. eds. <u>Healing the wounds of war</u>. Colombo: ICES., pp.167-192.</p> <p>Hasbullah, S. H. 1996 Refugees are people. Colombo: Northern Muslims Rights Organization.</p> <p>McGilvray, D.B. 2008 Crucible of conflict: Tamil and Muslim society on the east coast of Sri Lanka. Durham and London: Duke University Press. Read Chapter 8</p>
9	Displacement, Resettlement and Identity Issues	<p>Brun, C. 2008 Finding a place: local integration and protracted displacement in Sri Lanka. Colombo: Social Scientists Association. Read Chapter 2, 4 & 9.</p> <p>Silva, K.T. 2001 Armed conflict, displacement and poverty trends in Sri Lanka: evidence from selected displaced populations. In M. Mayer, D. Rajasingham-Senanayake & Y. Thangarajah eds.</p>

COURSE SYLLABUS

		<u>Building local capacities for peace: rethinking conflict and development in Sri Lanka</u> . Delhi: Macmillan, 2001, pp. 245-27
10	Tamil Nationalism	<p>Cheran, R. 2009 Pathways of dissent: an introduction to Tamil nationalism in Sri Lanka. In R. Cheran ed. <u>Pathways of dissent: Tamil nationalism in Sri Lanka</u>. Pp. Xiii-xlvii.</p> <p>Coomaraswamy, Radhika & Perera-Rajasingham, Nirmala 2009 Being Tamil in a different way: a feminist critique of the Tamil nation. In R. Cheran ed. Pathways of dissent: Tamil nationalism in Sri Lanka. Pp.107-138.</p> <p>Sivathamby, Karthigesu 2005 Being a Tamil and Sri Lankan. Colombo: Aivakam. Chapters !! (1 & 2). Pp. 67-81.</p>
11	Tamil Politics	
12	Ethnicity Development and Reconciliation	<p>Goodhand, J., Hulme, D. & Lewer, N. 2002 Social capital and the political economy of violence: a case study of Sri Lanka. Disaster 24 (4): 390-406.</p> <p>Herath, Dhammika 2008 Rural Development through social capital. Gothenberg: University of Gothenberg. Read Chapter 3: Social capital in war-affected villages. Pp.64-96.</p> <p>Peebles, Patrick 1999 Colonization and ethnic conflict in the dry zone of Sri Lanka. Journal of Asian Studies 49 (1): 30-55.</p> <p>Somasunderam, Daya 2010 Collective trauma in the Vanni: a qualitative enquiry into the mental health of the internally displaced due to the civil war in Sri Lanka. International Journal of Mental health 4 (22): 1-31</p>
13	Prospects for Long-term Peace in Sri Lanka	<p>International Crisis Group 2011 Reconciliation in Sri Lanka: harder than ever. London: ICG. (Crisis Group Asia Report No 209).</p> <p>LLRC 2011 Report of the Commission of Enquiry on Lessons Learnt and Conciliation. Colombo: LLRC. Read Chapter 8: Reconciliation, pages 251-324.</p>

COURSE SYLLABUS

		Silva, K.T. 2012 Why the wounds of war in Sri Lanka must be openly recognized and explicitly addressed? Some After Thoughts. In D. Herath and K.T. Silva eds. <u>Healing the Wounds of War: Rebuilding Sri Lanka after War</u> . Colombo: ICES, 2012 pp. 193-202.
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Students are requested to visit the following website for updates regarding peace and ethnic relations in Sri Lanka.

<http://www.groundviews.org>
<http://dbsjeyaraj.com/dbsj/>
<http://dbsjeyaraj.com/dbsj/archives/14731>

Students are also advised to read newspaper reports regarding ethnic relations and political developments in the country.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

IFSA takes academic integrity very seriously. Students must not accept outside assistance without permission from the instructor. Additionally, students must document all sources according to the instructions of the professor. Should your instructor suspect you of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty, you may receive a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action may result. The incident will be reported to the IFSA resident director as well as your home institution.

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