SOCG 222
Nation-Building in Asia

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Even in this age of globalization, we continue to live in the world of nation-states, and nationalism is ready to flare up whenever disputes break out over territories, natural resources, and historical injustices. But why do people come to feel so strongly about their national identities that they do not hesitate to denounce and even demonize foreigners? This question has important implications for Asia, where many nation-states are relatively young and forced to negotiate the competing demands for nation-building and regional integration. This course thus takes a sociological look at how national identity is socially constructed within the larger context of economic development, cultural practices, and domestic and international politics.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Attendance & Participation 15%
Individual Paper Based on a Visit to the National Museum of Singapore (1) 20%
Individual Memo Based on a Field Trip to One of the WWII Memorial Sites (2) 20%
Group Presentation Based on (1) and (2) 20%
Final Examination 25%

ACCOMMODATIONS

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let me know immediately. You are also welcome to contact the university's disability support team if you have questions or concerns about academic accommodations: included@smu.edu.sg. Please be aware that the accessible tables in our seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: What is “Nation”?


Week 2: How is National Identity Constructed?


Week 3: Why Is Memory Crucial to Nation-Building?


Week 4: The Role of Memorials, Museums, and Education


Week 5: War Memory and Nation-Building in Singapore I


**Week 6: War Memory and Nation-Building in Singapore II**


**Week 7: Visit to the National Museum of Singapore**


**Week 8: Recess [No Class]**

**Week 9: Japanese Memory of the Asia-Pacific War**


**Week 10: Chinese and Korean Memories of the Asia-Pacific War**


Week 11: Can We Resolve East Asia’s Memory War?


Week 12: Group Field Trip [No Class]

Visit one of the WWII memorial museums/sites in Singapore

Week 13: Group Presentation

Week 14: Group Presentation

Week 15: Revision Week [No Class]

Final Examination