Ethnic Identity

Instructor: Junpeng Li

Anhui University
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Description
Tailored for advanced undergraduates and graduates, this course provides an intensive introduction to the study of ethnic identity in North America and Western Europe, and its import, both as a body of knowledge and a way to framing empirical research, in sociology, anthropology, and China study.

My goals in the course are to acquaint you with significant, influential Western works in the area (especially but not exclusively in sociology and anthropology), to survey and assess the literature in the field, and to stimulate your own thinking about and research in ethnic identity in China. We will cover topics of identity, race, ethnicity, nationality, nationalism, and the state. To the extent that an overarching theme unifies the disparate readings, it probably is the identities induced race/ethnicity as a relational social construct that historically has been and is now deployed in a variety of political and cultural struggles. Whatever the particular intellectual locus, however, my real aims, again, are simpler: to have you read, ponder, and wrestle and argue with, good books and articles in the field, to prompt you to think broadly and deeply about the topic, and to help you acquire the conceptual tools and language essential to conduct research in ethnic identity and other related areas in China.

Requirements
1. Read prior to each class meeting, think, participate in class discussion, think again.
2. Responses to the readings – you need to contribute questions drawing from the readings in each class meeting.
3. An empirical research proposal on some aspect of ethnic identity. By “empirical,” I simply mean that you are to use evidence from newspaper accounts, historical cases, ethnographic observations, content analysis, and social surveys to address an important issue or question in the field of ethnic identity.

Readings
4. Other reading materials will be distributed in class.

**Day 1: Race and Ethnicity**

**Day 2: Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity: Primordialist Approach**

**Day 3: Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity: Constructivist Approach**

**Day 4: Imagined Communities I**

**Day 5: Imagined Communities II**

**Day 6: Variants on Ethnic Constructivism**
Day 7: Nation, Nationality, and Nationalism
Ernest Renan. 1882. “Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?”
Clifford Geertz. 1963. “Primordial and Civic Ties.”
Walker Connor. 1978. “A Nation is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group, is a...”

Day 8: Theories of Nationalism
Ernest Gellner. 1964. “Nationalism and Modernization.”
Ernest Gellner. 1983. “Nationalism and High Cultures.”

Day 9: Ethnic Identity in China: Becoming the Hui

Day 10: Ethnic Identity in China: Becoming the Zhuang