

Ethnic Politics in Comparative Perspective

PLSC 393/INTS 382
Fall 2006
Tues.-Thurs, 10:30-11:20
Luce 101

Prof. Thad Dunning
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Office Hours: Tuesday, 11:30-12:30 (reserved for PLSC 393/INTS 382 students)
Thursday 11:30-12:30 (general)

Teaching Fellow: Laia Balcells

Discussion section times and locations:

Thursday, 7:00-7:50 PM, William L. Harkness Hall 002, 100 Wall St.

Friday, 10:30-11:20 AM, Whitney Humanities Center B -03, 53 Wall St.

Objectives of the course:

What are the sources of ethnic identity, and what are the political consequences of ethnic divisions? How do political institutions in turn shape, constrain or foment ethnic conflict? What is the relationship between cultural cleavages, democracy, and economic development? These questions suggest some of the major themes that we will consider in this course.

To develop possible answers to these questions, we will read theoretical treatments as well as case studies from various regions of the world, including Latin America, Africa, and South Asia. A major goal of the class is to compare and contrast the strengths and limitations of distinct approaches to understanding ethnicity and to analyzing its political consequences. The emphasis is therefore on understanding and applying various analytic tools that have been used to illuminate ethnic politics in comparative perspective.

We will begin by discussing different approaches to defining and conceptualizing ethnic identity, including those that stress the enduring and fixed nature of ethnic groups (sometimes called “primordial” approaches) and those that emphasize that ethnic identities may be shaped and changed by various social and political processes (including “constructivist” and “instrumentalist” approaches). At times we will construe “ethnicity” broadly, discussing sectarian divisions based on language, race, and even religion. We will then turn to a range of selected topics, including: the role of political institutions in shaping the formation of ethnic groups and in providing various bases for ethnic political mobilization and participation; the relationship of ethnic parties to the stability of democracy; the politics of language; and the political economy of ethnicity, including the

relationship of the market to ethnic identity. We will also focus to some extent on armed conflict and civil war between ethnic groups as one possible pole of ethnic relations and as the continuation of ethnic politics by other means.

Expectations/Requirements:

There are no prerequisites for the course. The requirements include five short reading responses, an in-class midterm exam, a final exam, and participation in class and especially in discussion section, as described further below.

Reading Response Papers: Each student will post a 2-3 paragraph (about 1-2 pages) reaction to the readings for *five* different weeks on the class website. Each Thursday afternoon after class, I will post a brief question or series of questions or topics relevant to the readings for the week. Your answers/reactions should be posted the evening before the Tuesday class meeting in which we will begin to discuss these readings (by 8:00 PM on Monday). In each week that you write a posting, you should also print out a copy of your posting and give it to your TA in discussion section.

To see my questions and post your reply, log on to the class website at <http://classesv2.yale.edu> and follow the link to "Discussion." You should reply directly to the week's topic, rather than to postings by classmates, though you are encouraged to refer and reply to each other's postings.

Your postings could include an analysis of strengths or weaknesses of arguments made by the authors for the relevant week; questions with which you were left by the readings; and points of confusion that should be clarified. (You should not summarize the readings; assume that everybody else has done the reading as well). You do not have to discuss all of the readings assigned for the week; you can discuss just one or two, or you can pick a broader range and compare them to each other (or to readings for earlier weeks). The specific topics or questions picked for each week will also help guide your responses.

You are welcome to choose any five weeks in which to write reaction papers, though spacing things out over the semester might obviously be best.

In-class midterm exam: Thursday, October 31

(For expectations/requirements regarding the midterm, see the discussion of the final exam in the next paragraph).

Final exam: Friday, December 22 (9 AM)

There is no research paper to write for this course. However, the midterm and final exam will be designed to test some of the same skills and attributes as a research paper would require: careful reading of the texts; the ability to relate the readings to one another; the ability to discuss empirical cases in the light of different theoretical perspectives we have covered in the course; and the ability to analyze the extent to which these perspectives

help us make progress in understanding major questions regarding ethnic politics. Both the midterm and the final exam will include short answers and longer essay questions. The questions that I post each week regarding the readings may provide useful study guides for the exams.

Note that in the spring, I am teaching a seminar course, "Researching Ethnic Politics," which **will** require a research paper. Students who are excited about the material in this course and who want to develop their own inquiry into this topic are encouraged to take the spring seminar. (This would also be an excellent opportunity for students writing a senior essay). Depending on the level of interest in the seminar, taking this fall lecture course (PLSC 393/INTS 382) may be a prerequisite for the seminar. The spring seminar is open to undergraduate and graduate students, with half of the enrollment reserved for each.

Class/section participation: Active and prepared participation in class and particularly in the discussion section is critical.

Grade breakdown:

In-class midterm: 30%

Final exam: 40%

Discussion section participation: 15%

Response papers: 15%

Readings/Logistics: All of the books are on order at the Yale bookstore. They are also on reserve at the Sterling Memorial Library/Cross-Campus Library (SML/CCL) or at the Social Sciences Library (SSL), as noted for each book below. Several of the books are also available online through Orbis, and access the books electronically might be a cost-effective alternative to buying them. The course packet is available for purchase at RIS.

OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

WEEK 1: SEPT. 7

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE CLASS

PART I. WHAT IS ETHNIC IDENTITY?

Themes: We will discuss different approaches to the nature of ethnic identity. This will serve as an introduction to some of the main questions of the course, which we will consider in subsequent weeks.

WEEK 2: SEPT. 12-14

ETHNICITY AS PRIMORDIAL ATTACHMENT, AS AN OUTCOME OF POLITICAL PROCESSES, AND AS STRATEGIC CHOICE

Tuesday, Sept. 12

Required reading:

- Tavernise, Sabrina. "Iraq Power Shift Widens a Gulf Between Sects." *New York Times*, February 18, 2006. (Handed out in class).
- Horowitz, Donald L. 2000. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2nd Edition. Read pp. 51-92. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).
- Geertz, Clifford. 1963. "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States." In Clifford Geertz, ed., *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*. New York: Free Press of Glencoe, read pp. 105-130 (pp. 130-157 recommended). (In course packet).

Thursday, Sept. 14

Required reading:

- Yashar, Deborah. 2005. *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America: The Rise of Indigenous Movements and the Postliberal Challenge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-19. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).

- Chandra, Kanchan. 2006. "What is Ethnic Identity and Does it Matter?" Forthcoming in the *Annual Review of Political Science*. Read pp. 1-29. Available at http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics/faculty/chandra/chandra_home.html. Also linked from course website (<http://classesv2.yale.edu>).
- Weber, Max. 1978 [1914]. "Ethnic Groups." In Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, eds., *Max Weber, Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Berkeley: University of California Press (2nd printing). Read pp. 385-398. (Handed out).

Recommended reading:

- Fearon, James. 1999. "What is Identity (As We Now Use the Word)?" Manuscript, Department of Political Science, Stanford University. Available at <http://www.stanford.edu/~jfearon> (see "Working Papers, Comments, Commissioned Reports" section of the website). Also linked from course website.

WEEK 3: SEPT. 19-21

ETHNICITY AS PRIMORDIAL ATTACHMENT, AS AN OUTCOME OF POLITICAL PROCESSES, AND AS STRATEGIC CHOICE (CONTINUED)

Tuesday, Sept. 19

Required reading:

- Nobles, Melissa. 2000. *Shades of Citizenship: Race and the Census in Modern Politics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Read pp. 1-24 (pp. 85-128 recommended). (Available as online book through Orbis catalogue at Yale library site; also on reserve at the SSL).
- Laitin, David. 1998. "A Theory of Political Identities." In *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations of the Near-Abroad*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Read pp. 3-35. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).
- Laitin, David. 1986. *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change Among the Yoruba*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Read pp. 1-22. (In course packet).

Thursday, Sept. 21

Required reading:

- Posner, Daniel. 2005. *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-55. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).
- Weber, Eugene. 1976. *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Introduction (xi-xv) and Chapter 29, "Cultures and Civilization" (pp. 485-496). (In course packet).

PART II. THE POLITICAL SALIENCE OF SECTARIAN DIVISIONS

In this part of the course, we turn to some of the key questions of the course. How do political institutions shape the formation and persistence of ethnic groups? What determines which of the (often multiple) ethnic identities that people possess become politically salient? Why and when are ethnic groups politically mobilized specifically as ethnic groups? Under what sorts of conditions might people "choose" their identities?

WEEK 4: SEPT. 26-28

WHICH CULTURAL CLEAVAGES ARE POLITICALLY SALIENT?

Recent research in the social sciences and humanities emphasizes that people often have many identities: e.g., they may simultaneously have identities based on language, religion, or various ascriptive characteristics. Yet there is substantial variation, both across time and across countries, in the kinds of identities that become politically salient, even in social settings with "objectively" similar cleavage patterns. What determines why ethnic groups are formed and mobilized along one dimension of identity rather than another?

Tuesday, Sept. 26

Required reading:

- Posner, Daniel. 2005. *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 56-129, 274-288. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).

Thursday, Sept. 28

Required reading:

- Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98 (4): 529-545. (In course packet).
- Posner, Daniel. 2005. *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.130-158. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).

WEEK 5: OCT. 3-5

CLEAVAGES, POLITICAL COMPETITION AND ETHNIC MOBILIZATION

Even in countries with relatively stable ethnic cleavage patterns, political appeals to ethnic groups may or may not be cast in explicitly "ethnic" terms. When are ethnic groups mobilized as ethnic groups? What explains patterns of political participation in ethnic groups? How might ethnic violence be related to the incentives provided by political competition? This topic continues our discussion of the previous two weeks.

Tuesday, Oct. 3

Required reading:

- Posner, Daniel. 2005. *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.159-249. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).

Thursday, Oct. 5

Required reading:

- Wilkinson, Steven I. 2004. *Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Ethnic Riots in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1 and 2. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).
- Varshney, Ashutosh. 2002. *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 3-54. (On reserve at SML/CCL, at Yale bookstore, and pp. 3-54 only in course packet).

WEEK 6: OCT. 10-12

POLITICAL COMPETITION AND ETHNIC MOBILIZATION (CONT.)

Tuesday, Oct. 10

- Wilkinson, Steven I. 2004. *Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Ethnic Riots in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 5 and 6. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).
- Varshney, Ashutosh. 2002. *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 87-148, 262-278. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).

ETHNICITY, SOCIAL CLASS AND CONTENTIOUS POLITICS

What is the relationship between political mobilization and contentious politics based on social class and that based on ethnicity? Why are groups sometimes mobilized along “class” lines and other times along “ethnic” lines?

Thursday, Oct. 12

Required reading:

- Yashar, Deborah. 2005. *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters Two and Three. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).

WEEK 8: OCT. 17-19

ETHNICITY, SOCIAL CLASS AND CONTENTIOUS POLITICS (CONT.)

What is the relationship between political mobilization and contentious politics based on social class and that based on ethnicity? Why are groups sometimes mobilized along “class” lines and other times along “ethnic” lines?

Tuesday, Oct. 17

- Yashar, Deborah. 2005. *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters Four, Five and Seven. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).
- Kasfir, Nelson. 1979. “Explaining Ethnic Political Participation.” *World Politics* 31 (April): 365-388. (In course packet).

ETHNIC PARTIES AND DEMOCRATIC STABILITY

Is the mobilization of ethnic groups as groups -- especially, the existence of political parties identified with a particular ethnic group – helpful or harmful for the stability of democracy in ethnically-diverse societies? Under what conditions might ethnic parties promote or hinder democratic stability?

Thursday, Oct. 19

Required reading:

- Rabushka, Alvin and Kenneth A. Shepsle. 1972. *Politics in Plural Societies: A Theory of Democratic Instability*. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company. Chapter 1, “The Plural Society,” pp. 2-22 and Chapter Three, “Distinctive Features of Politics in the Plural Society: A Paradigm,” pp. 62-92. (In course packet).
- Chandra, Kanchan. 2005. “Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability.” *Perspectives on Politics* 3 (2): 235-252. (In course packet).

WEEK 8: OCT. 24-26

ETHNIC PARTIES AND DEMOCRATIC STABILITY (CONT.)

Tuesday, Oct. 24

Required reading:

- Chandra, Kanchan. 2004. *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed: Patronage and Ethnic Head Counts in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters One and Two. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).
- Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Read the first part of Chapter Seven, “Ethnic Parties and Party Systems,” pp. 291-311. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).

REVIEW, CATCH UP, AND PREPARATION FOR THE MIDTERM ON OCT. 31

Thursday, Oct. 26 Review for midterm

WEEK 9: OCT. 31-NOV. 2

Tuesday, Oct. 31

IN-CLASS MIDTERM

Thursday, Nov. 2

THE POLITICS OF LANGUAGE

Language, like other bases of ethnic identification, has provided an important source of political mobilization in many countries around the world. It is also, perhaps, a basis for identification that offers unusual latitude for ethnic identity “choice.” This week we discuss the politics surrounding official state language policies and also consider the political implications of linguistic choice.

Thursday, Oct. 26

- Laitin, David. 1992. *Language repertoires and state construction in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Read pp. 3-68. (In course packet).
- Laitin, David. 1998. *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations of the Near-Abroad*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Read pp. 36-82. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).

PART III. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF ETHNICITY

In this section of the course, we discuss the influence of economic conflict and economic institutions on the formation of ethnic groups as well as the influence of ethnic groups on economic policy.

WEEK 9: NOV. 7-9

ETHNICITY, TAXATION AND GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Many scholars have argued that the allocation of economic goods by governments – including jobs, roads, schools, etc. – has contributed to the formation of ethnic groups as well as their persistence, particularly in the developing world. At the same time, existing patterns of ethnic cleavages are sometimes used to explain the economic policies governments adopt. Does economic conflict shape the emergence of ethnic groups, and how do ethnic groups influence economic policy?

Tuesday, Nov. 7

Required reading:

- Bates, Robert. 1983. "Modernization, Ethnic Competition and the Rationality of Politics in Contemporary Africa." In Donald Rothchild and Victor Olorunsola, *State Versus Ethnic Claims: African Policy Dilemmas*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pp. 152-171. (In course packet).
- Fearon, James D. 1999. "Why Ethnic Politics and 'Pork' Tend to Go Together." Manuscript, Department of Political Science, Stanford University. Available at <http://www.stanford.edu/~jfearon> (see "Working Papers, Comments, Commissioned Reports" section).

Recommended reading:

- Easterly, William and Ross Levine. 1997. "Africa's Growth Tragedy: Policies and Ethnic Divisions." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112 (November): 1203-1250. (In course packet).

Thursday, Nov. 9

Required reading:

- Lieberman, Evan S. 2003. *Race and Regionalism in the Politics of Taxation in Brazil and South Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Read pp. 1-32. (On reserve in SML/CCL and at Yale bookstore).

Recommended reading:

- Miguel, Edward and Mary Kay Gugerty. 2005. "Ethnic Divisions, Social Sanctions, and Public Goods in Kenya." *Journal of Public Economics* 89 (11-12): 2325-2368. (In course packet).

WEEK 10: NOV. 14-16

ETHNICITY AND THE MARKET

Economic goods may also be allocated through markets. Reflecting old distinctions between "society" and "community" in sociology, many have viewed market relations as inhibiting the entrenchment of ethnic divisions. Under what conditions might the economic institution of the market have this effect? Alternatively, can market relations of exchange exacerbate ethnic conflict?

Tuesday, Nov. 14

Required reading:

- Edward Miguel. 2004. "Tribe or Nation? National Building and Public Goods in Kenya versus Tanzania." *World Politics* 56: 327-62. [Handed out in class and also available online]
- Chua, Amy. 2003. *World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability*. New York: Doubleday. Introduction and Chapters 1 and 5. (Available as online book through Orbis; also on reserve at the SSL and at the Yale bookstore).

Thursday, Nov. 16

Required reading:

- Chua, Amy. 2003. *World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability*. New York: Doubleday. Chapters 6 and 12. (Available as online book through Orbis; also on reserve at the SSL and at the Yale bookstore).

(NO CLASS ON NOV. 21-23 – FALL RECESS)

PART IV. ETHNIC CLEAVAGES AND ARMED CONFLICT

Ethnic competition sometimes "breaks down" into armed conflict between ethnic groups. The final two weeks of the semester focuses on studies that seek to explain the emergence of ethnic civil wars and compares the logic of these conflicts to other kinds of civil wars.

WEEK 11: NOV. 28-30

ETHNIC CONFLICT AS POLITICS BY OTHER MEANS

One way to view ethnic war, like other wars, might be to call it the "continuation of politics by other means." What is the relationship of ethnic competition through "peaceful" institutions like elections under democracies and the emergence of armed ethnic conflict? Is there something unique about "ethnic wars" relative to other kinds of conflicts?

Tuesday, Nov. 28

Required reading:

- Kalyvas, Stathis. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 173-182; 195-209; 364-392. (For purchase at RIS as separate reader).

Thursday, Nov. 30

Required reading:

- Snyder, Jack. *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict*. New York: W.W. Norton. Read pp. 1-42. (In course packet).
- Sambanis, Nicholas. 2001. "Do Ethnic and Non-Ethnic Civil Wars Have the Same Causes?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45(3): 259-82. (In course packet).

WEEK 12: DEC. 5-7

COMMITMENT PROBLEMS AND ETHNIC WAR

War in general is sometimes cast as an "efficiency puzzle." Given that war is costly, ex-post divisions of a "pie" could generally have been reached ex-ante, in a way that would have avoided war while preserving a larger pie and leaving everybody at least as well-off as after a war. Why do states or groups within states nonetheless go to war? One class of explanations focuses on "commitment problems." We will explore this class of explanations as it pertains to ethnic war, drawing on our previous discussions of the nature of ethnicity. Is there anything special about ethnicity that makes commitment problems harder to solve through institutional design? This week continues our discussion of war as "ethnic politics by other means" but focuses specifically on commitment problems.

Tuesday, Dec. 5

Required reading:

- Fearon, James D. 1998. "Commitment Problems and the Spread of Ethnic Conflict." In David Lake and Donald Rothchild, eds., *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, and Escalation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998. (In course packet).
- Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin. 1996. "Explaining Interethnic Cooperation." *The American Political Science Review*. Vol. 90 (4): 715-735. (In course packet).

Recommended:

- Fearon, James D. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49 (Summer 1995): 379-414. (In course packet).
- Fearon, James D. 2004. "Ethnic Mobilization and Ethnic Conflict." Manuscript, Department of Political Science, Stanford University. Available at <http://www.stanford.edu/~jfearon> (see "Working Papers, Comments, Commissioned Reports" section).

Thursday, Dec. 7

WRAP-UP AND REVIEW

Friday, Dec. 22: Final Exam