5. Cultural factors

a. An ethnic group shares cultural traits, such as language, religion, customs, food etc.
b. So, while I do not know who my Chinese ancestors are (beyond my 4 grandparents), my links to the Chinese ethnic group can be through my ‘Chinese’ practices (like [i] being stingy with good grades for students, and [ii] not wasting food, for examples)
c. So a Chinese person in America, a Chinese from Argentina, a Chinese from India may not have much in common, but yet their usage of chopsticks and celebrating CNY (for e.g.) bind them together as ‘Chinese’

- Primordialist views are deep-seated
- People hold on to these views stubbornly

Problems with primordialist views:

- Since a person’s ethnic group is fixed, children from ‘mixed marriages’ are complicated for someone who subscribes to primordialism – “Do you inherit your father or mother’s ethnic group?”
- New ethnic groups are interesting as they do not ‘fit in’, since all ethnic groups must come from something ‘old’ – for eg. Filipino-Singaporean or Burmese Singaporean people?
- So if ethnicity is immutable, so how come some ‘ethnicities’ can ‘disappear’? For example, Chitty Peranakan in Singapore
- Primordialist views were dominant until 1970

Theory 2: CONSTRUCTIONIST

1. Ethnicity is socially ‘constructed’ (i.e. it does not exist until it is created), and not ‘inherited’ from your family. Therefore, ethnicity emerges from society, and as the latter changes, so does the former

2. Because ethnicity is not fixed, therefore the boundaries between different ethnic groups are flexible, changeable

   a. You can learn the things of a different ethnic group

Example: Barack Obama (America’s 1st Black President)

- Father: Barack Obama, Senior was from Kenya
- Mother: Stanley Ann Dunhum (Causasian-American of English ancestry)
- They met while studying in Hawaii
- If one of the hallmarks of being African-American is having an ancestor who was an African who was brought to America as a slave, then Obama does not have that ancestry (does not have the slavery blood-line)
CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP IN A DEMOCRACY

“Cultural citizenship refers to the right to be different and to belong in a participatory democratic sense. It claims that, in a democracy, social justice calls for equity among all citizens, even when such differences as race, religion, class, gender, or sexual orientation potentially could be used to make certain people less equal or inferior to others. The notion of belonging means full membership in a group and the ability to influence one's destiny by having a significant voice in basic decisions.” (Rosaldo, R.)

✔ The cultural citizenship of an ethnic group in a country changes through time (context-dependent) as external circumstance changes.

Example: Sinama speakers of southern Philippines, who are related to a larger Sama-language family

✔ The Filipino state became independent in 1946 (from USA)
✔ But the Sinama speakers have been around long before that
✔ As sea-people, they traded as part of the wider ‘Malay world’ which included the current nations of Malaysia, Brunei etc
  o They were also Muslims, due to contact with Malay world
✔ From 1896-1946, under the Americans, southern Philippines came under ‘Filipino’ administration (where the southern Muslims, like other Filipinos, were groomed to be part of a future independent nation)
  o For e.g., Muslims were imbued with Christian values through the education system

(Horvatch, P 2003, ‘The Martyr and the Mayor’)
Nationalism: Dominant Ethnic Groups

The Han ethnic group is dominant in China
- Han Chinese way of living should be applied equally throughout the whole of China

Chinese nationalism on the world stage (anger about the disruption of Olympic torch relay in France) and also domestically (anger that foreign companies like Carrefour make money in China but yet support China’s minorities like Tibetan)
- Ethno-nationalism: people in China are unified by one culture – can be turned inwards in the country (assimilate)

Cyberspace/internet is a new frontier for nationalism

Question: Can we apply “Internal Colonialism” to Orang Asli of Malaysia?

- 18 different tribes of people – fall under the umbrella of Orang Asli
- Found near the Genting & Cameron Highland areas
- They were Australoids: Dark skin, curly hair, rounder nose
- Orang Asli people are hunter-gatherers – kill wild birds, monkeys, tigers etc. – men are the hunters and women are the gatherers
  - Gather fruits, yam, vegetables
  - Easier way of life, but since hunter-gatherer groups are small, they cannot start to sustain a big civilisation
- Orang Asli dominated different parts of South-East Asia (i.e. Philippines)
  - 5,000 years ago, a group of people came out of China to Taiwan, they were called the Austronesians – reached Malaysia 3,000 years ago
- Orang Asli people get religious power from the land they live on
- Government takes away land from them, and tries to move them to a different place – it impacts their religious practices
- Orang Asli was also slave to the Sultan due to their skin colour
- Orang Asli often forced to move to other villages – find it hard to adapt to new areas, forced to give up their hunter-gatherer practices etc.
- Yes, can apply Internal Colonialism to Orang Asli of Malaysia – evident discrimination

Reading #7: Internal Colonialism and China’s Uyghur Muslim Minority
(Dru C. Gladney)

‘Internal Colonialism’: Predicated upon the unequal rates of exchange between the urban power-centres and the peripheral, often ethnic, hinterlands.

- ‘Minoritization’ of the Uyghur became objectified when they were recognised by the Chinese state in 1950 as the Uyghur nationality.
• The social contract thus allowed Chinese-Indians to co-exist with Malays in Malaya
  o It implied how ‘one nation’ came about was artificial

• With the Chinese taking control of the economy, the Malays took control of the realms of royalty/politics/governance
  o E.g. the Chinese had control over all shops, imports and exports
  o Indians did not have control over anything – they were manual labourers (just construction-men, farmers etc.)

• This ‘social contract’ was not a ‘fair’ one to begin with

• It was written with the Malay as ‘SELF’ – as the new colonisers
  o Constitution says the Malays are the ‘privileged Self’

• The 1969 May 13 riots in Malaysia was partly a result of the unfairness that the Malays felt in terms of being economically left-behind by the Chinese. This was after all ‘Malaysia’, and the Malays felt that being poor in their own country vis-à-vis the Chinese (who were seen as new immigrants) was some sort of racial bullying – ethnic clash
  o Resulting in Malays killing the Chinese and Chinese killing the Malays
  o 100s of deaths

• So in 1971, New Economic Policy (NEP) was launched. In 1971, Bumiputera (sons of the soil, including Malays and other indigenous natives like the Dayak from East Malaysia and Orang Asli from peninsula Malaysia) became a significant ethnic category: it was officialised and became critical in the distribution of development benefits to the poor people as well as for the entrepreneurial middle class.
  Bumiputera does not have as many rights as Malays, but has more rights than the non-Bumiputera
  o Very discriminatory – e.g. Malay board directors in Chinese companies (Malays just sit at board meetings to collect directors’ fees)
  o NEP has taken many people out of poverty

RACE & POWER

• Today, Southeast Asian countries ‘complain’ that colonial countries ‘bullied’ them and that the situation now is much better because they themselves are in-charge

• Orang Asli were in Malaysia BEFORE the Malays/Chinese/Indians

• Yet today, across all statistics, Orang-Asli are worse-off than the Others (for eg. 76.9% of the Orang Asli population remains beneath the poverty line. 35.2% is classified as living in hard-core poverty, compared to 1.4% nationally)
• **Ketuana Melayu (Malay dominance)** – Leaders constantly remind non-Malays about the social contract, and if bullied, the Malays will ‘spill blood’ to protect themselves
  o When Malaysians need power support, they will use the ‘keris’ as a weapon to protect themselves
• UMNO used to tone down its Muslim credentials (‘moderate Islam’), in opposition to PAS’s fervent support of Islamic law for the whole of Malaysia
• UMNO is now also playing the ‘Islam’ card, to shore up its waning support
  To appeal to the pious Muslims who may have switched their support to PAS
• UMNO now supports the expansion of Shariah law in Malaysia after years of resisting a push for the introduction of a broader and more draconian Islamic penal code by PAS
• We can consider that ‘Malayness’ as a political construct is NO LONGER under the sole control of UMNO, the Malay-party that has been in power since 1957
• The tussle of Malay votes has created PAS, which has gained support from the lower-educated, poorer, more pious, rural Malays (as opposed to the better-educated, richer, urban Malays who support UMNO)
• UMNO is ‘upping’ Islamic piousness so as to attract PAS-supporters
  As a voting block, the Malays are no longer united
• “The Malay community is deeply divided, and pressures in dealing with sharp spikes in the cost of living and semi-urban and rural unemployment have triggered shifts in voters’ sentiments about the government. For the moment, UMNO still has the edge.”

**CASE STUDIES**

**Lina Joy**
- Born into a Muslim family
- Wanted to marry a Christian man, converted herself (apostasy)
- Went to Shariah Court to renounce her religious faith as a Muslim, but Shariah Court rejected her
- She appealed to the Supreme Court, but also failed
  Because the Supreme Court said that only Shariah Court handles religious matters, so in this case, the Shariah Court’s power precedes the Supreme Court’s power

**Riduan Abdullah Conversion**
- Ridwan was a Hindu, then he converted to Islam on his own accord
- His friends/colleagues witnessed his conversion
- Secretly converted his 3 children to Islam without his wife knowing
- Stole his daughter and ran away
  Court said that: if you are not present when you converted into another religion, then the conversion is void – Malaysia’s High Court rule unilateral conversion of children to Islam void

**Moorthy Hindu Muslim**
- Born a Hindu, converted when he was 15 (had witnesses to his conversion)
- However, his wife did not know about his conversion
Who are the Aborigines of Australia?

- Today, out of Australia’s 25 million people, about 2-3% (about 500,000) are of Aboriginal descent – a clear minority
- They are found throughout Australia, but most live in rural areas
- While Australia was founded by the British in 1788, the Aborigines had been there for at least 60,000 years
- Some even say that Aboriginal cultures in Australia are some of the oldest surviving cultures in the world
- Before 60,000 years ago, Australia was empty
- From around 60,000 years ago, people coming from the west (India) populated Southeast Asia (these 1st people are still in South East Asia, known as Negritos, or Orang Asli)
- Around that time, these people set off on boats from what is now Bali/Timor in Indonesia, travelled southwards until they reached the northwest coast of Australia
- The settling of Australia by Aborigines is probably the first major sea crossings made by humans anywhere in the world.
- These 1st people, within a few thousand years, settled the coastal areas of Australia, and later on moved inland also, including some of the driest places in the world
- There were different waves of migrations to Australia, and also different groups had different cultures as they had to adapt to different conditions throughout Australia

Aboriginal Cultures before 1788

- They were hunter-gathers
  - They didn’t plant vegetables or raise animals
    - This lifestyle is important to understanding the reactions of British settlers when they first met Aborigines in 1788
  - Because of hunting-gathering, they were nomadic
    - They didn’t live permanently in any one place, and their dwellings were also makeshift
  - Their group numbers were small
    - Look for water, vegetables and proteins → clear division of labour → men hunt and women collect food
  - Their technologies (stone artefacts, spears, baskets etc) were simple, but effective for them to survive for tens of thousands of years
  - Clash of civilisation when the whites came to Australia and saw the aborigines as primitives
  - Moved every 2 weeks so there are no permanent buildings.
• Unfair to heed the guilt of the white non-aborigines because aborigines are racist ad
ethnocentric as well → there is internal conflict within the aborigines
• Aborigines are pushed into a corner where they have little assistance available to
them → forced to infighting and compete over limited resources among themselves.

Reading #11: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the Australian Identity
(Ron Hampton and Maree Toombs)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians
- The original inhabitants of this land, continue to find themselves located in a
separate social stratum while maintaining their connection to ‘country’ and family.
- As minorities, they retain links to some of the oldest spiritual belief systems in the
world.
- Retain pride in their heritage, participate in all areas of contemporary life (e.g.
education, employment, community etc.)
- Australia fails to acknowledge contemporary and historic contributions made by
these people.

Other Australians
- Most immigrant traditions have bases in exploitation of the land and with the
accumulation of possessions and → leads to divisions (class, social status etc.), and allocates positions to groups or individuals based on power and influence.
- Perceptions of social & economic position are often associated with characteristics
such as race, ethnicity, skin colour and religious affiliation.
- Ethnocentric views based on British heritage have ignored the contributions of
diverse ethnic groups.
- The arrival of the first ‘boat people’ from Great Britain (the First Fleet) included
convicts, soldiers, sailors and officers, and subsequent fleets included large
numbers of immigrants of diverse origins.
  o Came in search of a better life for themselves and their children.
  o Brought attitudes, values, and beliefs derived from a wide range of traditions.
- White Australia Policy: instituted in 1901 due to the colonial descendants’ desire
to maintain their perceived cultural and social superiority.

Perceptions of Indigenous Australians’ Identity
- Generally neglected – Australia denied acceptance and recognition of their part in
the nation’s history.
- Until late 1970s, many Indigenous people continued to experience segregation on
reserves and ‘settlements’ located on the outskirts of towns.
- Around cities and towns, Aboriginal people were generally confined to ‘reserves’
on the outskirts, even after the 1967 Referendum.
- Faced discrimination – at workplace, school, outside etc.
## PROS AND CONS OF CONTROLLED ETHNICITY

### MALAYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singapore Constitution Article 152</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Minorities and special position of Malays</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>152.</strong>—(1) It shall be the responsibility of the Government constantly to care for the interests of the racial and religious minorities in Singapore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) The Government shall exercise its functions in such manner as to recognise the special position of the Malays, who are the indigenous people of Singapore, and accordingly it shall be the responsibility of the Government to protect, safeguard, support, foster and promote their <em>political, educational, religious, economic, social and cultural interests</em> and the Malay language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Malay community is the only one with:
- a Minister (Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs – Yacob Ibrahim): question of legitimacy; how many of Singapore Malays would have voted for him/her in an election?
- a government-funded Islamic Religious Council (MUIS) that manages not just the Islam, but also the Malay community (for e.g., all mosques come under MUIS, but there is no similar bodies for churches, Buddhist/Hindu temples)
- Separate Shariah courts, separate Registry for Muslim Marriages, National Anthem, reserved President...

The issue of Malay loyalty in armed forces (e.g. Malay men did not have to serve NS until the 1970s)

Deflecting the association between ‘Malay Muslims’ and “Islamic terrorism”

*There have already been at least two such instances here, he added.*

*In September, a Malay woman was approached by a man of another race, who said the words "suicide bomber" to her.*

*And in November, a week after the Paris attacks, the words "Islam murderers" were found scribbled at a bus stop in Bukit Panjang and on a toilet seat at Jurong Point shopping mall in Boon Lay.*

### INDIANS

- If one examined the top ranks of the civil service and in the professions, such as doctors, school teachers and principals, during the immediate years after independence, one would find an over-representation of Indians (due to their mastery of English) – CBH, 2005, p. 13
- Due to their small numbers, they appear to have a glass-ceiling in politics – the Malay Mail newspaper called Minister Tharman “the most popular politician in Singapore”
“No corner of the world is free from group scorn” – Gordon Allport

Prejudice (‘belief’) and discrimination (‘action’)

- In 1954, a Canadian wrote a letter of ‘request for booking’ to 100 hotels
- To each hotel, he sent 2 letters, one signed-off as ‘Mr Greenberg’, and the other ‘Mr Lockwood’
- The Greenberg letter got 52% of hotels replying, and 36% offering a room
- The Lockwood letter got 95% of hotels replying, and 93% offering a room
- Why? → Because Greenberg is a Jewish name and Lockwood is a White name, so the hotel obviously gave the White man priority over the Jewish
- 1954 was a long time ago, and people must be less prejudicial/discriminatory in 2018 → however it still happens
  - Still basing the idea that by looking at the person’s surname, you come to a conclusion
  - Belief that somebody’s race or ethnicity may be affecting his/her characteristics (prejudice)
  - Discrimination = putting the prejudice into action

Prejudice is a judgment based on previous decisions

- Allport’s 2 elements of ethnic prejudice:
  - 1) Hostility and rejection are involved
  - 2) The rejection was based on a person’s relationship with a group; the person was not judged individually
  - i.e. ‘hostile attitude toward a person who belongs to a group, simply because he belongs to the group, and it therefore presumed to have objectionable qualities ascribed to that group’ …..OR…… ‘thinking ill without sufficient warrant’

- ‘Prejudice’ may be positive or negative, but it’s a loaded term, and most people would equate it with something negative
- Allport also talks about ‘overcategorization’ (or ‘stereotyping’), where a person has a few facts (so they are based on ‘truth’) and then use those to generalize about the whole group
- “I met 2 nice New Zealanders, and therefore I think all of them are nice”
- Note that “prejudgement become prejudices only if they are not reversible when exposed to new knowledge”
- Consider layering on top of ‘prejudice’ the issues already discussed: ‘ethnocentrism’, ethno-nationalism’, Primordialism / Constructionism / Instrumentalism

ETHNIC CONFLICT

- A wide range of intra-ethnic conflict within a country that takes place between 2 or more ethnic communities, where the dispute can be political, economic, social, cultural or territorial (or a combination)
• ‘Beijing seeks loyalty from ethnic Chinese with foreign passports’
  o China is not just based in its physical locality, it is all over the world – people holding the Chinese identity card
  o Identity → Ancestral homeland
  o China has no plans for now to introduce an “overseas Chinese card” that will allow foreigners with Chinese ethnicity to enjoy permanent residency treatment and other benefits

Subjectivity of Ethnicity/Race:
• So, for example, does ‘Indian’ as a race exist?
• Does ‘Indian ethnicity’ exist in an uncomplicated nature that is tied to ‘India, the country’?
• What is the ‘ethnicity’ practiced by a Singaporean Indian? We would label his/her ‘ethnicity’ ‘Indian’, but how would we explain this Singaporean-Indian’s ‘Indian ethnicity’ to an citizen of India (of Indian ethnicity)?
• Frederick Barth’s idea of ‘boundaries’ – relocate your identity based on your surrounding
• With ethnicity, beyond the ‘shared culture, genes’, a people of the same ethnic group also share an ‘ancestral homeland’
• This is complicated: How many Chinese-Singaporeans have been to China, and/or refer to China as ‘ancestral home’?
• “Homeland” in this way remains one of the most powerful unifying symbols for mobile and displaced peoples.

Future Challenges with Race & Ethnicity:
1. Mixed-Race
   The controversial new ‘mixed’ category in the [Great Britain] 2001 census, attracted 400,000 ticks. One in ten ethnic minority Britons is the product of ‘mixed’ parents; one in 20 pre-school children in the UK is thought to be of mixed race. Britain has one of the highest rates of inter-racial relationships in the western world. Whether you view this is as a positive sign of a new multi-ethnic melting pot, or a negative watering down of the UK’s minorities, it is a fact.”
   o People within your own ethnic group will inter-marry – become mixed-race
   o Due to Globalisation, people are becoming more contemporary
   
   Singapore: More and more mixed-race families
   
   Side-effects: Children of mixed-race/dual ethnic heritage, may face identity crises since they are the minority
   
   They may be ambivalent about their race/ethnicity
   o Instrumentalism: Based on the social situation they are in, they will decide whether or not to reveal their race/ethnicity to their own advantage
   
   Or their identity may fluctuate, due to racism/ethnocentrism
   
   In an experiment, Tizzard and Pheonix’s (1993) survey showed that half black subjects not only get taunted by racists, but they themselves also make racist jokes about black people (perhaps to fit in better with the ‘non-black’ people)

   May be conceived in 2 ways:
   o As a stable social identity
This is tricky, because there is not one single ‘mixed-race’ identity in Singapore (for e.g., a Chinese-Indian, is different from a Malay-Eurasian etc).

Is this the ‘O’ in CMIO? How useful is this ‘Other’, vis-à-vis the specificity of ‘Chinese’, ‘Malay’, ‘Indian’?

‘Other’ element will always be a stable social element in the CMIO model

- As a sign of the post-racial future, where one’s ‘race’ will no longer be specific nor specified (since everyone will be ‘mixed’)
- If racial/ethnic mixing – which is already commonplace – continues, perhaps in the future, a person’s ‘race’/’ethnicity’ may take a backseat to other traits, such as ‘gender’, ‘nationality’ etc.?

2. **Cyberspace/Internet**

   In the past, face-to-face interactions bring to the fore the similarities/differences between the participants

   For e.g. someone’s race, gender, age, disabilities etc. could affect his/her face-to-face interactions with another person

   But on the internet, where interactions are ‘virtual’ (real, but not quite), a person can be whoever s/he wants to be, regardless of race, gender, age, disabilities etc.

3. **Globalisation**

   “globalization constitutes a policy and/or system that promotes global interaction interdependence and interconnection among nations through advanced technologies”

   “…homogenization, which is also known as ‘convergence, advances the possibility that local cultures can be shaped by other more powerful cultures or even a global culture”

   This inter-connecteness promotes ‘uniformity’, such as the increasing use of English as ‘global language’, also the sharing of global bodies to oversee complex cross-country

**Case study: Mac-Indonesia**

- 1st Macs opened in Jakarta in 1991. 85% of materials sourced from outside Indonesia.
- By 2003, 108 restaurants all over Indonesia. 85% of materials

**Globalisation & Tourism: Sarawak**

- Population 2 million
- 38% of Malaysia’s total land mass, but only 10% of total population
- 30% of Sarawakians are Iban: the largest ethnic group
- Yet Iban only have marginal role in Sarawak-state politics and economy
- Iban mostly rural-based; most are poor, slash-and-burn farmers
  - Cut down parts of the forest, ash gives nutrients for the soil, needed to grow rice
  - Iban people are monolithic and static
- In most books / articles, the Iban are: