PS 91 DOCUMENTING CHANGE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

This course is an advanced seminar that explores the political changes of the late colonial to the contemporary period in Southeast Asia. This course is intended as an interdisciplinary approach to the study of world politics. The readings draw widely from political science, anthropology, history, and literature to situate Southeast Asia as a field of knowledge and power. In this class we will look at the political and cultural inventions that have shaped Southeast Asia as a field of knowledge, beginning with the age of colonial expansion and consolidation of power in the region; to the birth of the nation-state and its various incarnations in the nationalist era; independence, the cold war, civil wars, insurgencies, the development era of the 1970s - 1990s; and current studies of theoretical and socio-political interest. Politics, language, history and modern cultural identities have emerged as the products of cultural change and ingenuity. Documenting Change in Southeast Asia acknowledges the shifting landscape engendered by new sites of political power, as well as new sites of theoretical interest. What falls under the lens of scholarship now include the study of race and gender, oral histories, photography, art, film, and studies of technology. Students are invited to consider and debate the frames of reference for each unit theme, and to draw connections between different units. For your final paper, you are encouraged to think comparatively between countries as well as critically on any topic that takes up issues of political modernity in “Southeast Asia.”

Not open to first year students.

Books to purchase at Food for Thought Book Cooperative:
Benedict Anderson, Spectre of Comparisons
Monique Skidmore, Karaoke Fascism

All readings marked M are in the Multilith, and readings marked OL are to be found online. Readings from the books are marked P. Recommended readings are NOT included in the Multilith.

Films will be screened on Thursday before the Monday class, and Tuesday before the Wednesday class. All other films will be streamed online.

Course Requirements:
- Regular class attendance and engaged participation
- Sign up to lead class discussions on a regular rotating basis. This involves generating 2-3 good discussion questions and emailing them to the class by 8 PM the day before.
- Read all assigned materials before our class meeting time
- Two short response papers, a midterm proposal, paper presentation, and final paper

Unit Response Papers: Over the course of the semester, you must complete two short response papers (4-5 pages) to two assigned units. The first paper on “Plural Societies” is due SEPTEMBER 24th, and the second paper on “The Margins of the Nation” is due NOVEMBER 5th.
these papers, you will identify the key concepts of the unit, and address the work of three or more authors you have read from that unit. I encourage you to map out connections between readings, and also draw upon classroom discussions to formulate your response. In these papers, you should not merely summarize these readings. You will read and evaluate the authors’ ideas critically, and use evidence from the readings to support your analysis. Everyone MUST complete the paper on “Plural Societies.” If you are especially keen on writing on another unit for the second paper, in place of “The Margins of the Nations,” please discuss it with me at least two weeks before the second paper is due. These papers will count for 40% (20% X 2) of your grade.

**Midterm:** A proposal for the final paper. You may choose your own topic, but please consult your instructor well in advance of the due date (OCTOBER 15th). You will write a detailed 3 – 4 page abstract of the paper topic, describing key issues and questions to be addressed in the paper. In this abstract, it is not necessary to demonstrate that you know how to answer these questions. At this stage the goal is to develop an interesting and feasible question for your research paper. Please include a bibliography of at least 12 sources that demonstrates that you have done preliminary research on what sources might be relevant for your paper topic. You are encouraged to include at least 6 of the class readings as part of your bibliography, along with outside sources. The midterm proposal is 10% of your final grade.

**Paper Presentation Workshop:** Students will present their paper topics in class in a ten-minute informal presentation on DECEMBER 8th and 10th. The papers need not be in polished form, but you must clearly outline the question, the main argument of the paper, and the evidence you have collected to support your argument. You are expected to listen carefully and contribute constructive criticism of your classmates’ papers when they are presenting. 10 % of grade, includes points for in class participation.

**Final Paper:** a 10 – 15 page research paper is due on DECEMBER 16th. No late papers will be accepted. Final paper counts for 40% of your final grade. Please follow proper citation guidelines.

**DEADLINES:**
- SEPTEMBER 24: UNIT RESPONSE PAPER 1 20%
- OCTOBER 15: MIDTERM PAPER PROPOSAL 10%
- NOVEMBER 5: UNIT RESPONSE PAPER 2 20%
- DECEMBER 8-10: PAPER PRESENTATIONS 10%
- DECEMBER 16: FINAL PAPER 40%

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

**I. Introduction to Southeast Asia**

**Sept. 3.**
**Sept. 8. Locating Southeast Asia**

Recommended Reading:

**Sept. 10.** Map Quiz!
- Chapters 14, 15, 16 in *The Emergence of Modern Southeast Asia*. Pp. 201-251. (M)

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**II. Plural societies: Colonial Fantasies of Southeast Asia**

**FILM:** *Mother Dao, the turtlelike* [videorecording]: a kinematographic image of the Dutch-Indies, 1912-c.1933 / by Vincent Monnikendam. This film will be screened twice on Thursday, Sept. 11 at 113 Fayerweather, at 4 and 7:30 pm.

**Sept. 15.**
- Benedict Anderson. “Census, Map, Museum” in *Imagined Communities*. (M)

**Sept. 17. Racial Typologies**
- Frank Swettenham, *British Malaya*, pp.133-157. (M)

**Sept. 22. Race and Gender**
- Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia*, Chapters 5-6, pp. 114-158. (M)

**FILM:** *Indochine.* This film will be streamed online.
Sept. 24.


Recommended reading:
Daniel Lev. “Yap Thiam Hien and Aceh” in Indonesia 82 (October 2006)

FIRST UNIT RESPONSE PAPER DUE IN CLASS, SEPTEMBER 24th

III. Nationalism and Revolution

Sept. 29.


Oct. 1.


Class assignment: A chance to do some online or library research. Bring to class an especially fitting example (case study) of contemporary nationalist or patriotic behaviour in contemporary Southeast Asia that matches, complements, or contradicts Anderson’s analysis in this essay. Each student will discuss his or her example for about five minutes. Discuss the connections that can be made with Anderson’s text.

Oct. 8. The End of Revolution

- Excerpts from Jan Banning’s photobook – Traces of War (London: Trolley Books). (M)
Oct. 11-14. Fall Break

**MIDTERM PROPOSAL DUE IN CLASS, OCTOBER 15th.**

**IV. Violence and the State**

**Oct. 15.**
- Hannah Arendt, *On Violence*. Selections. TBD

**Oct. 20.**
- Benedict Anderson, “Withdrawal Symptoms”, Chpt. 7 in *Spectre of Comparisons* pp.139-191. (P)

**Oct. 22.**
- Monique Skidmore, *Karaoke Fascism*

**Oct. 27.**
- *Karaoke Fascism* continued.

**V. Irregular Landscapes: the Boundaries of the Nation**

**Oct. 29.**

**Nov. 3.**

**Nov. 5.**
• Benedict Anderson. “Long-Distance Nationalism” in The Spectre of Comparisons. (P)

Recommended reading:

SECOND UNIT RESPONSE PAPER DUE IN CLASS, NOV. 5.

VI. Space and Image in Contemporary Southeast Asia

Nov. 10.

FILM: Cyclo (Vietnam, Tran Anh Hung, 1995). This film will be streamed online.

Recommended readings:
Rudolf Mrazek, “Bypasses and Flyovers: approaching the metropolitan history of Indonesia.” Social History Vol.29 No.4, November 2004. *Highly recommended!*

Nov. 12.

Recommended Reading:
Lisa Drummond, “Popular Television and images of urban life” in Consuming Urban Culture in Contemporary Vietnam

Nov. 17.
• Rachel Harrison, “Introduction: cinema as an emerging field in South East Asian Studies” in South East Asia Research, 14, 2, pp.133-146. (M)
• May Adadol Ingawanij, “Un-Thai sakon: the scandal of teen cinema” in South East Asia Research, 14, 2, pp. 147-177. (M)
FILM: *Tears of the Black Tiger*. This film will be streamed online.

**Nov. 19. Class Cancelled due to AAA meetings**

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**Thanksgiving Break: Nov. 22-30**

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**VII. Technology**

**Dec. 1. Technology and Politics**

**Dec. 3.**

Recommended reading:
David Hill and Krishna Sen. *The Internet in Indonesia’s New Democracy*

**Dec. 8:** Paper Presentations

**Dec. 10:** Paper Presentations

**Dec. 16:** Final Papers DUE.