SOUTHEAST ASIA: CROSSROADS OF THE WORLD
(HIS 462)

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Office hours: 9:00-11:00 T/Th or by appointment
Time and Place: T/Th 11:00-12:15, Creighton Hall 336

Required textbooks:


Course description and objectives:
Southeast Asia has often been affectionately referred to as the world's digestive organ. For thousands of years different cultures, products, technologies, and languages have flooded into the region from East Asia, India, Arabia, Africa, and the West and what has emerged has always been distinctly Southeast Asian. From Thai curry, to Indonesian mosques, to Vietnamese socialism, Southeast Asia represents a unique microcosm of global history while retaining its own distinctly exotic culture.

The primary goals of this course are 1) to gain an understanding of the general narrative of Southeast Asia history, 2) to recognize and understand historical patterns and concepts, 3) to gain familiarity with historiographical trends and scholarly consensus on various subjects in Southeast Asian history, and 4) to improve analytical and critical thinking skills through readings and writing assignments.

Expectations:
- Attendance – All students are expected to attend class regularly, to arrive on time, to stay the entire class period, to come prepared, and to actively participate in class discussion and assignments.

- Classroom Etiquette – While this section is often unnecessary, there are occasionally some students that may forget that university courses are a commodity purchased by students, and often represent a great deal of time and sacrifice. Hence, each of us has a responsibility to ensure that each student gets his or her money’s worth. Arrive to class on time, stay the whole period. Please turn off cell phones, ipods, etc. DO NOT TEXT. Participate with the class rather than doing other homework, reading newspapers, or sleeping.

- Plagiarism and Cheating – Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in this course. These are capital offenses in the academic world. Plagiarism and/or cheating will result in the filing of a report of academic dishonesty. Guilty students will be dismissed from the class and referred to a disciplinary council in addition to receiving an “F” in the course.

- Students also should expect my best efforts as the professor. It is my goal to provide the best educational experience possible. I am interested in your success as students and will do everything possible to help you succeed in this course.

Class Cancellation Policy
In case of an unexpected class cancellation due to inclement weather or some other reason, I will try to notify all students through the BlueLine course site and via e-mail. In the event of a college-wide disruption of normal classroom activities, the format of this course may be modified to enable completion of the course. More information will be forthcoming, as necessary.

Assignments:

- Reading Responses – A large part of the course will involve analytical discussions of various reading assignments. Students will prepare a 300-400 word typed response to the readings indicated in the syllabus in preparation for classroom discussion. Students should include insights, reflections, and critical questions rather than simply providing a summary. Each response is worth 25 points.

- Exams – There will be a mid-term and final exam worth 250 points each. These exams will be open note and book in class. I will provide two potential questions for each exam and choose one on the day of the test. Since these are open book exams it is expected that students will provide a clear thesis statement supported by in-depth analysis and effective use of historical facts and examples. The exam should also be well organized and written. Preparation for these exams should be an ongoing process throughout the semester. Students should constantly be formulation ideas, arguments, and outlines for the questions provided. Students should demonstrate their abilities to think and write critically while synthesizing information. The first question I ask when grading exams is: does this exam represent several weeks of diligent thought and preparation. They are designed to prompt students to engage the material rather than simply trying to retain it for a test. It is my hope that after the
exams each student will be able to engage in historical discourse intelligently and authoritatively wherever they may be.

- **Comparative Book Review** – Each student will write a 4-6 page comparative book analysis of *This Earth of Mankind* and *Noli Me Tangere* focusing on the shared and contrasting colonial themes in each. This assignment is worth 200 points.

- **Research Paper** – Each student will write a 10-15 page paper on some aspect of Southeast Asia. The paper is worth 300 points. Topics and parameters of these papers will be discussed as the course progresses. Each student is expected to meet with me at least once during the semester to go over paper topics, sources, etc.

- **Participation and Discussion** – Since this is an upper division course, student participation and discussion is not only suggested but required. We will be discussing a variety of primary and secondary sources that must be critically engaged in if they are to be understood.

- **Grade Breakdown** – Exams: 500 pts (33%); Research Paper: 300 pts (20%); Comparative Book Review: 200 (14%); Reading Responses: 400 pts (27%); Participation and Discussion: 100 pts (7%)

- **There is no extra credit offered. Exams cannot be made up. If you have a severe schedule conflict, please come see me before hand so we can discuss it.**

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability that will require special accommodation(s) in this course, please contact the Disability Support Services (DSS) in 200 STU. The DSS will assist me in providing the necessary accommodations in order to enhance the learning environment for you. DSS will provide you with a letter that describes your specific needs and the necessary accommodations. Please bring that letter to my attention as soon as possible, and before the due date of the first course requirement.

**Class/Reading Schedule:**

**January 13 – Syllabus, Introductions**

**January 18 – Historiography: Challenges of SE Asian History; Geography and Rice** – Read, Osborne, pp. 1-17; Tarling, “The Writing of Southeast Asian History” [READING RESPONSE DUE];

**January 20 – Big Men and Patron-Client Relations; Foundations of SE Asian Culture** – Read, Geertz, “Notes on a Balinese Cockfight”; *Bewitching Women* pp. 19-50 [READING RESPONSE DUE]
January 25 – Indic Civilizations – Read, excerpt from Wood, *India*; excerpts from the Life of Buddha [**READING RESPONSE DUE**]

January 27 – Buddhism in SE Asia – Read, *Cambridge History of SEA* “Indic Religions,” excerpts from the Pali Canon [**READING RESPONSE DUE**]

February 1 – Indianization: Mainland Kingdoms and Insular Trading Empires – Read, Osborne, pp. 18-69

February 3 – Confucianism in SE Asia; The Origins of Islam – Read, Aslan, *No God But God* excerpt

February 8 – Islam in SE Asia – Read, *Islam in Southeast Asia* pp. 3-63 [**READING RESPONSE DUE**];

February 10 – Coming of the West – *Modern Southeast Asia* pp. 19-147; Hawkins “‘Disrupted’ Historical Trajectories” [**READING RESPONSE DUE**]

February 15 – High Imperialism – Kartini pp 1-99; Rafael, “Census and Melodrama in US Colonization of the Philippines” [**READING RESPONSE DUE**]


February 24 – Nationalism and the Beginning of the End of Colonialism – Discuss *Noli Me Tangere* and *This Earth of Mankind* [**COMPARATIVE BOOK REVIEW DUE**]

March 1 – Review for Exam; Tie Up Loose Ends

March 3 – **MIDTERM EXAM**

March 5 – March 13 – Spring Break!!!!!

March 15 – WW II and Decolonization – Read, *Modern Southeast Asia* pp. 283-333; *Comfort Woman* excerpt [**READING RESPONSE DUE**]

March 17 – Socialism and the First Indochina War – Read, *Modern Southeast Asia* pp. 335-344; “In Search of Ho Chi Minh” [**READING RESPONSE DUE**]

March 24 – Cambodia: Socialism and Auto-genocide – Read, *Modern Southeast Asia* 361-375; *First They Killed My Father* excerpt [READING RESPONSE DUE]

March 29 – Indonesian Massacre and East Timor – Read, *Modern Southeast Asia* 431-447; Documentary *From the Barrel of a Gun*

March 31 – Decolonization and Islam in Southeast Asia – Read, *Islam in Southeast Asia* pp. 135-255; *Bewitching Women* pp. 159-194 [READING RESPONSE DUE]


April 7 – Global Diasporas and Post-Modernity – Read, *Modern Southeast Asia* pp. 448-508; *Bewitching Women* pp. 195-215, 244-273 [READING RESPONSE DUE]

April 12 – Global Diasporas and Post-Modernity – Read, Hawkins, “Questions of Victimization and Agency in the Immigrant Experience,” *While the Blanket is Short* excerpt [READING RESPONSE DUE]

April 14 – Individual Meetings to Discuss Research Papers

April 19 – Movie, *Anak*

April 21 – Movie, *Anak*

April 26 – Research Roundtable - Present theses, sources, etc.

April 28 – Final Thoughts, Review for Exam

**FINAL EXAM, MAY 3, 1:00-2:40**
**RESEARCH PAPER DUE DAY OF EXAM!!!**

**MIDTERM EXAM QUESTIONS**

1. Southeast Asia’s pre-modern history is one of staggering adaptability, assimilation and, consequently, magnificent economic and political success. Given the region’s history of successful interaction with outside influences, why were they so ill equipped to deal with Western intrusion? Or is the whole notion of Western dominance a fiction of Orientalist scholarship? That is, does the West simply fall in contextually with the other civilizations that have become a part of Southeast Asian history? Or did they present something new and indomitable?

2. Some scholars argue that Southeast Asia’s unique culture of patron client relations and matri-focal gender systems function as the primary threads of
cultural constancy throughout the region’s history. In other words, these two characteristics act as the cultural sieve through which outside influences must pass, and by which they become distinctly Southeast Asian. Do you agree? If so, how are these two cultural characteristics demonstrated throughout Southeast Asian history? Or are there other, more dominant cultural tenets or systems that shape the region’s history and culture? And how are these demonstrated?