

HY 2550: Introduction to Southeast Asian History

Module: HY2550 (Summer 2008)

Module Title: Introduction to Southeast Asian History

Semester: Special Term, 23 June - 25 July 2008

Teaching Staff: Martin Platt, <platt@hum.ku.dk>

Schedule: 23 June - 25 July 2008

Aims and Objectives:

This course aims to investigate a variety of aspects of Southeast Asia's history while at the same time encouraging students to engage with issues of what history is or can be, who writes it, and for what purposes. Rather than following a time line through an overall historical narrative, we will instead explore different approaches to learning about the past, including academic history, local history, oral history, autobiography, and film. The course will concentrate on the experience of history by individuals in the region at different places and times: contexts will include Burmese traditions, Vietnamese colonial life, independence-era Java, a Malay sultanate in Siam, prisoners in New Order Indonesia, Lao political re-education, and contemporary Thai nostalgia. Taking advantage of our location and the Southeast Asia in Context program, students will practice history themselves by carrying out a short oral history project of their own.

Teaching Modes: Lectures, in-class discussions, field trips, project and presentation

Readings: Required readings for each class are given below and marked with an asterisk (*). Supplementary readings are also listed for some meetings. A useful background text is D.J. Steinberg, ed. 1987. *In Search of Southeast Asia*. Revised Edition. Honolulu: U Hawaii Press. This text provides context for some of the topics and subject matter we will be covering in class.

Syllabus

Week 1

Monday June 23: Introduction: Global, Regional, Local, Marginal

* Donald Emmerson. 1984. "Southeast Asia: What's in a Name?"

Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, 15 (1): 1-21.

* John Tosh. 2002. *The Pursuit of History (Revised Third Edition)*. London:

Longman/Pearson Education. Chapter 1 "Historical Awareness", pp. 1-25.

* Thongchai Winichakul. 2003. "Writing at the Interstices: Southeast Asian Historians and Post-National Histories in Southeast Asia". in Abu Talib Ahmad and Tan Liok Ee, eds. *New Terrains in Southeast Asian*

History.

Singapore: Singapore University Press. pp. 3-29.

Tuesday June 24: Pattani, Siam, Thailand I

* Chris Baker. 2002. "Afterword: Autonomy's Meanings". in Sunait

Chutintaranond and Chris Baker, eds. *Recalling Local Pasts: Autonomous History in Southeast Asia*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm. pp. 167-182.

* Thanet Aphornsuvan. 2004. "Origins of Malay Muslim 'Separatism' in Southern Thailand". Asia Research Institute, Working Paper Series No. 32, National University of Singapore.

Wednesday June 25: Pattani, Siam, Thailand II

* Ibrahim Syukri. 2005. *History of the Malay Kingdom of Patani*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm.

Thursday June 26: Field Trip to Fort Canning, National Museum (led by John Miksic)

Friday June 27: Local History in Southern Thailand

* Lorraine Gessick. 1995. *In the Land of Lady White Blood: Southern Thailand and the Meaning of History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program.

Week 2

Monday June 30: Speaking for Oneself

* Walter L. Williams. 1991. *Javanese Lives: Women and Men in Modern Indonesian Society*. New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press.

"A Market Woman", pp. 13-18; "A Farmer and Village Leader", pp. 19-29;

"A Princess at the Sultan's Palace of Surakarta", pp. 30-37; "A Policeman", pp. 53-60; "A Pedicab Driver", pp. 68-73.

* Helen C. Trager, ed. 1969. *We the Burmese*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger.

"My Family", pp. 111-117; "How I Failed to Become a Were-Tiger", pp. 118-124; "Profile of a Frontier Man", pp. 128-134.

* Ludu U Hla. 1986. *The Caged Ones*. translated by Dr. Sein Tu. Bangkok: Tamarind Press. "Preface", pp. 2-3; "The Vagrant", pp. 47-53.

* Joanna C. Scott. 1989. *Indochina's Refugees: Oral Histories from Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam*. Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland. Khamsamong Somvong: "Not So Wonderful Was That Time", pp. 161-174;

Soukan Vignavong: "Their Words Hide All That Is Bad", pp. 175-190; Anon., "The News Collector", pp. 217-227.

Supplementary Reading:

Tu Binh. 1985. *The Red Earth: A Vietnamese Memoir of Life on a Colonial Rubber Plantation*. Ohio University Center for International

Studies.

Tuesday July 1: Field trip to Malacca (led by John Miksic)

Wednesday July 2: Telling One's Own Story

* Roxana Waterson. 2007. *Southeast Asian Lives: Personal Narratives and Historical Experience*. Athens: Ohio University Press, and Singapore:

NUS

Press.

Chapter 2: Carol Warren. "Madé Lebah: Reminiscences from 'Jaman Setengah Bali' (Half-Bali Times)", pp. 41-87.

Chapter 4: Roxana Waterson. "A Toraja Pilgrimage: The Life of Fritz Basiang", pp. 125-178.

Chapter 5: Annette Hamilton. "Marking Time: Narratives of the Life-world in Thailand", pp. 221-252.

Thursday July 3: Imprisoned in the New Order

* C. W. Watson. 2006. *Of Self and Injustice: Autobiography and Repression in*

Modern Indonesia. Leiden: KITLV Press. Introduction, pp. 1-34;

Chapter

III: "Battered by the waves: A woman in prison during Soeharto's New Order government", pp. 67-85.

* Sujinah. 2000. *In a Jakarta Prison: Life Stories of Women Inmates*.

Jakarta:

Lontar Foundation. Foreword, Publisher's Note, and Translator's Note, pp. vii-xvii; "Asmi: The Shoplifter", pp. 18-27; "Leha: Harbor Rat", pp. 42-49; "Anonymous: Bu Rono, The Evil Midwife", pp. 70-78; "Ita: Man at Heart", pp. 88-93; "Genuk: Between Him and Me", pp.

96-105.

Friday July 4: Interviewing: Issues and Techniques

* John Tosh 2002, *op. cit.* Chapter 11: "History by word of mouth"; pp. 295-322.

* Roxana Waterson 2007, *op. cit.* Chapter 1: "Introduction: Analysing Personal Narratives"; pp. 1-37.

* Daniel Chew. 1998. "Oral History Methodology: The Life History Approach". in

P. Lim Pui Huen *et al*, eds. *Oral History in Southeast Asia: Theory and*

Method. Singapore: National Archives of Singapore and Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. pp. 47-54.

Week 3

Monday July 7: No Class-- Conduct and Process Interviews

Tuesday July 8: Film: *Bang Rajan* (in Thai, with English subtitles)

Wednesday July 9: Film and History in Thailand

* Robert Rosenstone. 1988. "History in Images/History in Words: Reflections on the Possibility of Really Putting History onto Film". *American Historical Review* 93, 5 (December 1988): 1173-1185.

Supplementary Reading:
David Herlihy. 1988. "Am I a Camera? Other Reflections on Films and History". *American Historical Review* 93, 5 (December 1988): 1186-1192.

Thursday July 10: Present and Discuss Projects; Papers Due

July 11 - 22: Trip to Thailand and Cambodia

Week 5

Wednesday July 23: No Class (writing report and preparing for final exam)

Thursday July 24: 10:00 - 12:00 Wrap-up lectures

Friday July 25: Field trip reports due
Final Examination
6:00 pm Closing ceremony and dinner

Assessment:

Attendance, Participation / Discussion	20%	
Field Log (Thailand portion)		25%
Class Project	30%	
Final Exam (HY2550 portion)	25%	

Field Log: This is not an account of what you did, but a reflection on your observations on the trip and how you relate them to the formal study of Southeast Asia, including class readings, issues, and discussions.

Class Project: Students will form small groups (each with at least one Singapore student), and each group will design, carry out, and write up their own short oral history project. Choice of interview subject, topic, and approach will be related to materials and issues considered in class, but specifics (e.g., the person interviewed, the questions asked, and the final write-up) will be determined by each group in consultation with the instructor. Details to be provided in class.

Final Exam: This will be a sit-down exam covering the entire summer program.