

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History
Spring 1985

History 457

SOUTHEAST ASIA TO 1800

Smail

Southeast Asia is close to Europe in land area and population but, as the debacle of the Vietnam War showed, most Americans know very little about the area. This course assumes no previous knowledge of the area. It is an introduction to Southeast Asian history from its beginnings about 2000 years ago up to about 1800. During this period sparse populations of tropical rice-growing villagers speaking a great variety of languages were gradually consolidated into larger blocs -- the traditional kingdoms, peoples and civilizations that then, in the 19th and 20th centuries, entered the modern industrial era (the subject of History 458). The same general process occurred in Northern Europe over almost exactly the same 2000 years from the time Julius Caesar's legions marched into Gaul, but with one striking difference. The larger blocs that gradually formed in Europe (France, Poland, etc) shared a single world religion and were variants of a single civilization. Their counterparts in Southeast Asia drew on all the great religions: Hinduism over much of the region in the first thousand years; Buddhism in what are now Burma, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos; Chinese Confucianism/Buddhism in Vietnam; Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia; Roman Catholicism in the Philippines.

The unique diversity of Southeast Asian civilizations, their unfamiliarity, and the long stretch of time covered should make it clear that this course is not a detailed step-by-step narrative. It sketches broad themes and introduces cultural traditions that are still very much alive today, as we learned expensively in Vietnam.

Lectures and Discussions

Normally lectures M & W, discussions F. The fourth class hour will meet in the Stiftskeller. Students must attend at least six times during the semester, in weeks of their choice, bringing as a ticket of admission a notecard with a question for discussion.

Grading

- 7th and 12th week exams (25% each)
- final exam, based on an advance list of questions (45%)
- map exercises and quizzes (see separate sheet) (5%)

Reading

Assigned reading is about 1500 pages. All required readings except Harrison are on Reserve in the Helen C White Library. Assigned readings should be done before the beginning of the week for which they are assigned.

Office Hours (5219 Humanities)

Mon 1-2
Fri 10:30-11:30
or by agreement at other times

I. BEGINNINGS1st week

- M 21 Jan - Introduction; the Land Dayaks (film)
 W 23 Jan - Discussion: filling in the pattern chart
 F 25 Jan - Geography

Clifford Geertz, Interpretation of cultures, 368-84, 389-404

2nd week

- M 28 Jan - Food (slides)
 W 30 Jan - Pre-history
 F 1 Feb - Discussion (Map Exercise III due)

Robbins Burling, Hill farms & paddy fields, 40-63
 Clifford Geertz, Agricultural involution, 12-37

3rd week

- M 4 Feb - Going Civic
 W 6 Feb - Hinduism & Buddhism
 F 8 Feb - Discussion: early trading states (Map Exercise I due)

Brian Harrison, South-East Asia, a short history, ix-xi, 7-31
 Clifford Geertz, The religion of Java, 4(last para)-29
 Paul Wheatley, Pivot of the four quarters, 248-57

II. CLASSICAL AGE4th week

- M 11 Feb - Angkor I (including film)
 W 13 Feb - Angkor II
 F 15 Feb - Discussion (Map Exercise II due)

Harrison, chapter 4
 David Chandler, A history of Cambodia, chapters 1-4
 Bernard Groslier, Angkor, art & civilization, browse

5th week

- M 18 Feb - Pagan I
 W 20 Feb - Pagan II
 F 22 Feb - Discussion (Quiz I)

Burling, 26-7
 Maurice Collis, She was a queen (novel)

6th week

- M 25 Feb - The Chinese borderlands
 W 27 Feb - Nam Viet, Dai Viet
 F 1 Mar - Discussion

Burling, 105-17
In Search of Southeast Asia, chapter 8

7th week

- M 4 Mar - Radio station states
- W 6 Mar - Redistributive economies
- F 8 Mar - EXAM

no assignment

8th week

- M 11 Mar - Java, art history
- W 13 Mar - Shadow puppet theater (film)
- F 15 Mar - Discussion

Claire Holt, Art in Indonesia, chapters 2, 3, 5 and pages 267-71
Harrison, chapter 5

SPRING VACATION

III. MAINLAND: 13th to 18th CENTURIES

9th week

- M 25 Mar - The appearance of the Tai-speakers
- W 27 Mar - The making of the Siamese
- F 29 Mar - Cores & Zones

E.R. Leach, "The frontiers of 'Burma'"

10th week

- M 1 Apr - The Confucianization of Dai Viet
- W 3 Apr - Nam Tien; discussion of Tale of Kieu
- F 5 Apr - GOOD FRIDAY - no class

In Search..., chapter 15
Michael Cotter, "The Vietnamese southward movement..."
Nguyen Du, The tale of Kieu, pages 3-162 (narrative poem)

11th week

- M 8 Apr - Mainland society I
- W 10 Apr - Mainland society II
- F 12 Apr - Discussion (Quiz 2)

Chandler, chapter 5

IV. ISLANDS: 13th to 18th CENTURIES

12th week

- M 15 Apr - EXAM
- W 17 Apr - Great Age I
- F 19 Apr - Great Age II

Harrison, chapters 6-10
Paul Wheatley, The Golden Chersonese, 206-25

13th week

- M 22 Apr - Islam
- W 24 Apr - Islam overlaid on Java
- F 26 Apr - Discussion: Baum, Anderson, abangan/santri/priyayi

Vicki Baum, Tale of Bali (novel)
Claire Holt (ed), Culture & politics in Indonesia, 1-19 (Anderson)
Geertz, Religion of Java, 121-30, 227-60

14th week

- M 29 Apr - Pepper trade and pepper port
- W 1 May - Dutch rule overlaid on Java
- F 3 May - Discussion

In Search..., chapters 9, 10, 18

15th week

- M 6 May - The last core
- W 8 May - Discussion
- F 10 May - New Age

John Phelan, Hispanization of the Philippines, 3-89
William Schurz, Manila Galleon, 15-78