ANTH2450/GENA2332 PEOPLES AND CULTURES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Thursdays, 2.30-4.15
Venue: Zoom Meeting

Instructor: Dr. FAMING, Manynooch
Contact: nychma@cuhk.edu.hk
Office Hour: By appointment
TA: Chen Yingjun (cyj.ruc@outlook.com)
Tutorials: Thur. 4.30-5.15 (T01); 5.30-6.15 (T02)

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the social and cultural complexity of Southeast Asia (SEA) region. This can be mapped as a part on mainland Southeast Asia includes the countries of Burma/Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Singapore, and Malaysia. Island Southeast Asia includes Indonesia, The Philippines, Brunei, and Timor-Leste. The course is taught as a seminar and discussions will organized around assigned readings and guest speakers from individual countries. The seminar will begin with historical background of the region, readings on the history of anthropology in the region, before moving onto ethnographic accounts of individual countries. These cover belief systems, marriage and family, industrialization and urbanization, politics and government, and economic change. In addition to providing a broad and comparative exploration of “traditional” Southeast Asia, the course will place special emphasis on the intellectual and practical challenges associated with modernization and development, highlighting the ways different Southeast Asian nations contend with the forces of globalization.

The principle readings are drawn from a multidisciplinary range of fields covering anthropology, art, economics, geography, history, literature, and political science. No prior knowledge of Southeast Asia is expected.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:
1. Gain better understandings on Southeast Asia through the individual country case
2. Develop comparative skills in studying peoples and cultures of each country in SEA
3. Apply socio-cultural anthropology perspective to understand a specific group(s) of peoples and cultures in SEA

Course Requirements

a. Zoom class participation 20%
b. Zoom Tutorial Discussion leader 20%
c. One documentary/film reflection 20%
d. One Final Essay 40%
Assessment Details

A. Class Participation 20%
Each week, I will randomly select students to prepare some questions related to the weekly topics before class. You must prepare ONE meaningful question that can lead to our class discussion. I will also involve the class (on a random selection) to help me respond if there are no volunteers. This participation part will also take your contributions during tutorials as well.

B. Tutorial discussion leader 20%
This role to prepare a set of 3-4 key points for discussions. These key points should be drawn from assigned readings. You may post questions related to your selected key points or sharing of experiences and/or asking classmates for contributions. Groupmates are required for a prompt attendance at each tutorial meeting, informed participation, and completion of all assigned readings. Every student is expected to be an active member in class and in contributing to a meaningful learning experience. Listening carefully to others, raising relevant questions, posting alternative interpretations, bringing in outside material to enrich class discussion via conference or other means are just some of the way to do so. How ready and conscientious you are in class will directly affect how much the whole class could gain from the course.

C. One Documentary/Film Reflections 20%
Student will write a short reflection (or about between 1,000 words) of what you have learned from watching the selected documentary/film. The marking criteria will be the same as the final essay. Due: Mar. 12, 2021 by 6pm.

D. Final Essay 40%
Students will write a 15 or so-page final paper (e.g., about between 2,000-2,500 words), excluding references, that:
Option 1: draws on interviews of people from Southeast Asia either living in Hong Kong or of your personal contacts.
Option 2: though careful readings, reflect upon what you have learned about peoples and cultures of SEA (which can be a comparison of two or more countries or a single country). If you are unsure where to begin or feel more challenged, you may discuss, for example,

“Should SEA be studied as a geographical region or as a cultural zone or as mosaic of cultural groups? Why so?”

Use the readings in the course to help you analyze your impressions and thoughts. Do approach me and our TA for help or suggestions.

Both options should also draw out from the class discussion and texts to critically analyze and advance your argument on an issue or topic you aim to demonstrate. Due: Apr. 15, 2021 by 5pm.

A. Notes on submission
Note 1: Both reflections and final essay must submit a soft copy to VeriGuide CUHK.
Note 2: Please name your assignment file ANTH2450 or GENA2332 Film/Doc Review (1 or 2 or 3)/Final Paper Last name First name, and your VeriGuide receipt ANTH2450 orGENA2332 VeriGuide Last name First name.
Note 3: Save your all written assignments in Word format, and scan your signed VeriGuide receipt into PDF format. Save them as two separate files. Upload the VeriGuide receipt to the blackboard folders.
Course Schedule

Week 1  Jan. 14:  Introduction: Course Overview

Week 2  Jan. 21:  Brief History of SEA as a Region

Other reading:

Week 3  Jan. 28:  Mainland Southeast Asia Peninsula: Buddhist States


Week 4  Feb. 4:  Thailand: Monarchy and Politics


Other readings:


Week 5  Feb. 11:  Myanmar/Burma: the Struggles of Ethnic Minorities

https://www.newmandala.org/twin-authoritarianisms/

Other readings:
https://www.newmandala.org/assessing-rohingya-crisis/


*Note: Zoom class will continue accordingly to the public holiday during the Chinese New Year vacation.

Week 6  Feb. 18:  Laos and Cambodia cultures and societies

**Week 7**  
Feb. 25.: **Vietnam: Trauma after the American War**


*Other readings:*  


**Week 8**  
Mar. 4.: **The Philippines: Socio-economic bread winner**


*Other readings:*  


**Week 9**  
Mar. 11.: **Islamic States in Reality I: Indonesia**


*Other readings:*  


*Film/Documentary review:* Communism, Suharto, Cold War and people  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLT6G8FD3E4 (Documentary: 40 years of silence: An Indonesia tragedy)

**Week 10**  
Mar. 18: **Islamic States in Reality II: Malaysia**


Other readings:

Week 11 Mar. 25.: Singapore

Other reading

Week 12 Apr. 1: Islamic States III: Brunei; Timor Leste in transition

Other Readings:
“Prologue: Brunei Versus Borneo” (pp: 1-3) and “Tradition as an Instrument for Managing Society” (pp: 258-260), in Brunei: From the age of commerce to the 21st century by Marie-Sybille de Vienne (2015); translated by Emilia Lanier. Singapore: NUS Press in Associate with IRASEC.

Week 13 Apr. 8.: Conclusion: ASEAN as one SEA?
Amitav Acharya. 2012. “Ch. 7: Constructing “One Southeast Asia” in The Making of Southeast Asia: International Relations of a Region, Singapore: ISEAS.