ILAS 225
Southeast Asia: Crossroads of the World
Spring 2008

Classroom: McMurry Auditorium 204
Time: 12:30-1:45 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday
Course Coordinator: Professor Kheang Un
                       Pottenger House 200
                       Tel: (815) 753-8822
                       Office Hours: M, W 10:00-12:00 and by appointment
                       E-mail: kun1@niu.edu

Course Objectives: This course meets the general education requirement for interdisciplinary studies. The general objective of this course is to introduce you to the fascinating world of Southeast Asia. This objective recognizes the need for contemporary Americans to be educated and familiar with another cultural region in order to understand the complex process of globalization and rapid international change around the world today. Southeast Asia is one of the most diverse areas of Asia. The countries of Southeast Asia include Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia (all primarily Theravada Buddhist countries); Vietnam and Singapore (mixed Taoist-Buddhist countries); Brunei, Malaysia, and Indonesia (all primarily Islamic countries); the Philippines and East Timor (primarily Roman Catholic). This course is taught from an interdisciplinary perspective, which introduces you to the region through the lens of social sciences, humanities, and the arts. The course is organized around a loose chronological and thematic framework, and divided into three distinct parts described in the course readings section.

Course Goals: There are three specific goals for this course. First, the course will increase your knowledge of the different countries of Southeast Asia, including their geographical features, political systems and religious traditions. In this way, the course will improve your understanding of the importance of environment to human cultures in the past and the complexity of the human condition. Second, the course will provide you a broad overview of the history and cultural diversity of this region of Asia, thereby increasing your knowledge about the accomplishments and contributions of non-western civilizations. In this way, you will gain increased appreciation and tolerance for cultures other than your own. Third, the course will enhance your understanding of how art, architecture, literature, and sculpture reflect basic religious and cosmological themes throughout the region. In this way, you will gain an understanding of the diversity of art forms and how the arts reflect different cultural beliefs, ideals, and truths throughout all parts of the world.

Required Text for Purchase:
Required Texts and Articles on Print Reserve (PR) in Founders Library (reserve desk) or on Electronic Reserve (ER) (available on the Web through the Blackboard course server):

**Texts:**
- Szymusiak, Molyda. *The Stones Cry-out.* (PR)
- Ngor, Haing. *A Cambodian Odyssey.* (PR)
- May Someth. *Cambodian Witness.* (PR)
- Criddle, Joan, and Teeda Buttman. *To Destroy is No Loss.* (PR)

**Articles:**
- Lewellen, Ted "Import Substitution, Basic Needs, and the Physical Quality of Life Index: the Domestic Economy". (ER)
- Ma, "Cultural Diversity". (PR)
- Molnar, Andrea "Christianity and Traditional Religion among the Hoga Sara of West Central Flores". (ER)
- Wiegele, *Investing in Miracles* (ER)
- Reid, A. “Age of Commerce” (ER)
- Holt, C. *Art in Indonesia* (ER)
- Osborne, M. “Second World War in Southeast Asia.” (ER)
- Sheridan, G. “Jihad Archipelago.” (ER)

**Map Quiz:** A key part of the first exam in this course is a map quiz, which is worth 25% of your exam grade. The 4th floor of Founders Library has a special area designated for Southeast Asian materials called the Donn V. Hart Collection. Most of the maps, however, are in the map library, 222 Davis Hall. Most of the Southeast Asia maps are located in two drawers that hold maps in the G8000 – G8015 call number range, so are easy to find.


**Center Web Sites:** Most of our faculty lecturers have placed their lecture notes and/or outlines up on the Crossroads Web site ([www.seasite.niu.edu/crossroads/](http://www.seasite.niu.edu/crossroads/)) next to their names, and these notes can facilitate your understanding of different lectures. *To learn more about becoming a Southeast Asian undergraduate minor or a member of the Southeast Asia Club, our student-run organization, or more about Study Abroad opportunities in Southeast Asia, check out the Center Web page ([www.niu.edu/cseas/](http://www.niu.edu/cseas/)) or talk to Dr. Un, the course coordinator.* Also, one of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies' projects is the development of a Southeast Asian language and culture Web site, complete with interactive language learning lessons. You may access this site at
www.seasite.niu.edu to learn more about the various countries and languages of this region.

Examinations, Written Projects, Attendance, and Grading Procedures:
There are *three examinations*, as outlined below. Exams will cover lectures, handouts, text materials, maps, reserve readings, and films. Exams focus heavily on class lectures, but we pass out study guides before each exam. You are expected to read the appropriate chapters of the required texts or the items on reserve in the library before each class session. These readings will help you understand the class lecture.

In addition, you are expected to do a short, interdisciplinary research project involving in-depth study of either Cambodia, East Timor, or of Burma (Myanmar). Our faculty members, Professors Judy Ledgerwood, Andrea Molnar, and Richard Cooler, have each designed short Web courses that are highlighted on our Crossroads web site (www.seasite.niu.edu/crossroads/). You will need to read and take notes on this course in order to write some short essays in class later in the semester. Dr. Ledgerwood’s Web course is titled “Cambodia Modern History and Social Organization”, Dr. Cooler’s Web course is titled “Burmese Art and Culture” and Dr. Molnar’s Web course is titled “East Timor: An Introduction to the History, Politics and Culture of Southeast Asia’s Youngest Nation.” We will discuss this synthetic essay in class after the first examination.

Students are required to attend class regularly in order to do well in this course, and so we will take attendance. You are not allowed to miss more than one class without losing points for this “participation” section of your grade (a loss of four points for each additional absence). Irregular arrival and departure times to the classroom or other disruptive behavior also are not allowed. You must arrive to class on time (no more than 5 minutes late), and you should not leave the class until the class period is over. These aspects of your class performance and attendance are reflected in your grade for 'participation', and a failure to follow these basic classroom performance standards will result in a loss of points for participation.

Grades are determined as follows:
- Exam 1 = 100 points (multiple choice = 75; map = 25)
- Exam 2 = 100 points
- Exam 3 = 100 points
- In-class synthetic essay = 40 points
- Participation (class attendance = 40; Web discussion = 20)
- Extra credit = +20 (1/2 letter grade)

Total points (maximum) = 400

Extra Credit:
Students have the opportunity to gain up to 20 points of extra credit by going to one or both of our Southeast Asia Cultural Nights hosted by the Southeast Asia Club or the NIU Anthropology Museum exhibit on Cambodia. We will announce these times and dates in class. To receive the credit, students must attend an event or the exhibit and write a 2-3
Faculty Offices and Telephone Numbers:

Office hours of the individual faculty lecturers are posted on their office doors or may be obtained from each faculty member's department secretary. Faculty offices are located in the following places:
Kenton Clymer, History, Zulauf 715 (753-6814)
Kikue Hamayotsu, Political Science, Zulauf 414 (753-1011)
Patricia Henry, Foreign Languages, Watson 123 (753-6454)
Eric Jones, History, Zulauf 708 (753-6657)
Dwight King, Political Science, Pottenger House 204 (753-1771)
Judy Ledgerwood, Anthropology, 202A Stevens Building (753-8579)
Andrea Molnar, Anthropology, 202B Stevens Building (753-8578)
Catherine Raymond, Art History, Art Building 110/Pottenger House 101 (753-7862)
Susan Russell, Anthropology, 207A Stevens Building (753-8577)
Kheang Un, Center for Southeast Asian Studies/Political Science, 753-8822
Katharine Wiegele, Anthropology, 200A Stevens Building (753-7032)
Ann Wright-Parsons, Anthropology, Cole 6 (753-0230 by appointment only)

Note: NIU abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which mandates reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please contact me early in the semester so that I can provide or facilitate in providing accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR), the designated office on campus to provide services and administer exams with accommodations for students with disabilities. The CAAR office is located on the 4th floor of the University Health Services building (815-753-1303).

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Lecturer</th>
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<tr>
<td>PART I:</td>
<td>Land and People of Southeast Asia</td>
<td>Un</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-15</td>
<td>Introduction and discussion of course organization and objectives</td>
<td>Un</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Text readings:</strong> Neher, Ch. 1 &quot;Introduction&quot; and Ch.2 “Southeast Asia: Region of Diversity”</td>
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<td>1-17</td>
<td>Archaeology of Southeast Asia</td>
<td>Ledgerwood</td>
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<td>This lecture covers the prehistory of Southeast Asia from the coming of the first ancient ancestors, Homo Erectus, to the region until the</td>
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establishment of large scale communities in the first millennium BC. We discuss different archeological sites across the region, with particular emphasis on mainland sites in Thailand and Cambodia.


1-22

Physical, Political and Cultural Geography

*Description:* This lecture covers the basic geography of Southeast Asia, highlighting the historical impulses in the region owing to its location at the crossroads of trade between India and China. It also reviews conventional ways and reasons behind how scholars understand the ethnic diversity of this region.

*Text reading:* Neher, Ch.3 “Historical Highlights”  
*Article reading:* Ma, “Cultural Diversity” (PR)  
*Movie:* *World Regional Geography: Southeast Asia*

1-24

Languages of Southeast Asia.  

*Description:* This lecture focuses on the diversity of languages of SEA. Genetic and typological classifications of SEAsian languages are presented. Phonological and syntactical characteristics are demonstrated. The background history of the scripts used in Burma, Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand is explained with reference to some Indian alphabets. It concludes with examples of some words borrowed commonly from the Sanskrit and Pali languages into almost all SEAsian languages.

*Website Readings:* See John Hartmann’s lecture outline “Spoken and Written Languages of Southeast Asia” on the Crossroads website ([www.seasite.niu.edu/crossroads/](http://www.seasite.niu.edu/crossroads/)).

1-29

Mahabharata and Ramayana  

*Description:* This lecture begins with a brief description of several key Hindu concepts (including karma, rebirth, caste, dharma, and meditation), with particular attention paid to Indic literature. The lecture then examines two major Hindu epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, well-known throughout Southeast Asia. In addition to a brief discussion of major events and characters in the story, the lecture also discusses how language is used by characters in the story, as well as by those who tell the story.

*Article readings:* C. Holt, 'The Mahabharata” and excerpt on 'Living Traditions,' in *Art in Indonesia* (ER)
Description: The lecture continues to explore the story of the Mahabharata and Ramayana, but with the focus on its performance as Javanese wayang (shadow theater). Particular emphasis is given to the ways in which wayang performance is seen as something which affects as well as depicts the Javanese world. Understanding the role of wayang is the key to understanding many aspects of traditional and modern Javanese culture, and some of these aspects are discussed in detail. Again, the role of 'powerful language' is significant here, especially for wayang which have ritual significance.

Article reading: Holt, C. *Art in Indonesia* (ER)

2-5 Material Culture of Southeast Asia                        Wright-Parsons

Description: This lecture discusses the magnificent textile arts of Southeast Asia, and is illustrated with original textiles and artifacts from the Museum of Anthropology.

2-7 Discussion and Review

2-12 Exam I--includes Map Quiz. You should know all the places on the handout.

PART II. Religion and Arts of Southeast Asia

2-14 Christianity in the Philippines                                      Wiegele

Description: This lecture offers a brief history of Roman Catholicism in the Philippines, and then focuses on more recent religious innovations that shape the contemporary cultural and religious landscape for the Christian majority.

Article Readings: Katharine L. Wiegele, “Introduction” (pp. 1-10) and “Local Religious Life” (pp. 115-141) in *Investing in Miracles* (ER)

2-19 Movie: *Ramadan: a Fast of Faith*                        Un

This movie was filmed in Java, Indonesia, and follows a family throughout the various phases of Ramadan, the holy fasting month of Islam.

2-21 Islam in Southeast Asia                                          Molnar
Description: This lecture discusses the historical and cultural impacts of Islam in insular Southeast Asia. Emphasis is given to understanding how Islam was introduced into the region, and its basic religious and cosmological characteristics. Specific attention is given to how Islam affects the contemporary politics of the region.

Text reading: Neher, Ch. 4 "Culture"

2-26 Movie: The Three Worlds of Bali

Description: On the Indonesian island of Bali, the arts permeate almost every aspect of daily life. Gamelan music, wayang (shadow puppet) theater, dance, and elaborately constructed offerings of foods and flowers all represent attempts to please the gods and placate demons. In Balinese cosmology, demons are thought to dwell in the watery underworld, gods in the upper world, and human beings in the middle realm between the two. Much of human effort is directed toward maintaining the proper balance between these worlds, and between the forces of growth and decay.

(From: Documentary Educational Resources website, www.der.org)

2-28 Buddhism in the Arts of Southeast Asia I

Description: This lecture discusses the essential components of Buddhism as described in the earliest texts and explains their significance. It deals with the most important doctrines of Buddhism, the various paths to nirvana, the two major schools of Buddhism, and Buddhism as it is practiced and reflected in the temple architecture of Pagan, Burma.

Recommended reading: Bechert and Gombrich, The World of Buddhism, 1964. (not on reserve)

3-4 Buddhism in the Arts of Southeast Asia II

Recommended reading: Philip Rawson, The Art of Southeast Asia, 1967. (not on reserve)

3-6 Discussion and Review

3-11 Spring Break

3-13 Spring Break

3-18 Exam II

PART III. History, Politics, and Economy of Southeast Asia

3-20 Movie: From the Barrel of a Gun
Description: Third in the film series, The Pacific Century, this film describes the revolution began by Asia's political leaders following WW II. Shows how the Pacific war, the cultural revolution in China and the Vietnam War stem from the roots of nationalism. The end of colonial dominace and the subsequent rise of nationalism and communism are told through the lives of Ho Chi Minh, the Vietnamese revolutionary, and Sukarno, the founding father of Indonesia.

3-25 Colonialism in Southeast Asia Jones

Description: This lecture/film focuses on the origins of colonialism, the spread of colonialism in Southeast Asia, some questions about colonial policies, and a comparison of the colonial rule of the different European powers in the area.

Article reading: Reid, "An 'Age of Commerce' in Southeast Asian History" (ER)

3-27 World War II and Southeast Asia Jones

Description: The late 1930s and 1940s were a time of shifting diplomatic alignments in Southeast Asia. Because Europeans and Americans were preoccupied with domestic economics and defending against the German advance in Europe, they were less interested in their Asian colonies. This opportunity enabled Southeast Asian nationalists to assert leadership. At the same time, Japan was extending its economic influence and military power, moving southward through China into Southeast Asia. The Japanese cultural campaign proclaimed that Asia should be ruled by Asians and promised independence from the Western colonial/imperialist rule. At first some Southeast Asians admired and welcomed the Japanese. However, when the promised independence was not granted, Southeast Asian nationalists--many of whom had been leaders in resisting Western colonial rule (as in Indonesia, Burma, and Vietnam)--mounted underground movements to drive the Japanese out. The Thai underground anti-Japanese movement (the Free Thai or Seri Thai) had several branches, but all were concerned with freeing the nation of foreign interference. The most significant development of the World War II period in Southeast Asia was that nationalist independence movements flourished.

Article reading: Osborne, "The Second World War in Southeast" (ER)

4-1 The Vietnam War: The United States in Vietnam from the 1940s to the Tet Offensive of 1968 Clymer

Description: This lecture will discuss the origins of "America’s Longest
The Vietnam War which, in some ways, began in 1945, and certainly in 1950. It will trace the initial decision to favor the French in Indochina over Ho Chi Minh’s Viet Minh, including the decision to give aid directly to the French for military operations in Vietnam. After the defeat of the French in the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, the United States attempted to create a nation and committed itself to the new state of South Vietnam. President Kennedy increased the American commitment in the early 1960s, and President Johnson chose war in 1965, which led to an increasing level of violence that culminated in the Tet Offensive of January-February 1968.

**Text reading:** Review, Neher, *Southeast Asia*, pp. 144-155; 192-194

4-3

The Vietnam War (continued): The Vietnam War II: From the Tet Offensive To the End of American Involvement in Vietnam  
Clymer

**Description:** This lecture will trace the gradual withdrawal of the United States from Vietnam during the administration of Richard Nixon. In addition, it will discuss the tragic involvement of Cambodia in the war as the result of American secret bombing of the country and a coup against Prince Sihanouk in 1970. Cambodia was now brought fully into the war in Vietnam, an involvement which ended in the savagery of the triumphant Khmer Rouge in 1975.

4-8

**Movie:** *Return to the Killing Fields*  
Un

**Description:** The true extent of the horror may never be known. But with the perspective provided by the passage of time, we can finally begin to understand the tragedy that befell Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge. Bill Kurtis leads this trip to the infamous Killing Fields, where Pol Pot’s regime tried to establish a pure Communist society by eliminating the ruling class, the educated class, the officer corps and a large number of the peasantry of his nation. Between one and four million people died before the Khmer Rouge was forced from power. *Return to the Killing Fields* features exclusive interviews with people who witnessed the systematic massacres, including survivors and those who actually carried out the torture and killing. Their shocking stories offer a uniquely personal view of one of the most reprehensible chapters in human history.

4-10

**Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge Period**  
Un

**Description:** When the Khmer Rouge came to power in Cambodia in April 1975, they undertook a radical experiment in social engineering, emptying the cities and forcing the entire population into backbreaking agricultural labor with little food. The result was the death of at least 1.5 million people from a population of some 7-8 million. This lecture discusses the events of this period, readings are from first person accounts of survivors, and a film provides historical background.

4-15 East Timor Molnar

*Description: East Timor History and Culture*

The lecture provides a comprehensive overview of the history and cultures of East Timor, Southeast Asia's newest Nation. As a reading source and for further detailed information on the country, students are encouraged to log on to seasite and read the introductory course on East Timor. Among others, geography, history, culture and languages, and politics of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste are included in the lecture.

*Article reading: “East Timor: An Introduction to the History, Politics and Culture of Southeast Asia’s Youngest Nation”.*

4-17 In-class synthetic essay exercise Un

Come prepared to answer questions on either the Burmese Art, Cambodian History or East Timor websites.

4-22 Separatism and Radical Islam Kikue Hamayotsu

*Description: This lecture seeks to answer two questions. First, what link exists between the historical growth of extremist (or ‘radical’) Islamist groups and acts of terrorist violence in Southeast Asia since September 9, 2001? Second, what connections exist between extremist Islamist groups and the much older separatist Muslim movements in Southeast Asia? Southeast Asia is a region where more Muslims reside than can be found in the entire Arabian peninsula and more than can be found in the next two most populous Muslim states, India and Pakistan. While local varieties of Islam in Southeast Asia have always blended with ethnic and cultural diversity, Islamic fundamentalism and much smaller extremist sects that subscribe to a literal interpretation of the Qu’ran and shari’ah law have gained in popularity in recent years. This lecture will review the historical roots of extremist Islamic groups in Indonesia and the wider region, as well as the Muslim minority grievances and separatism in southern Thailand and the southern Philippines, with an emphasis on why contemporary violence continues today. The tension between locally tolerant, moderate and syncretic Islam versus the globalist intolerant and some of the extremist versions of Islam coming from the Middle East will be emphasized.*

Development and the Quality of Life in Southeast Asia

Description: The lecture begins with discussion of the human resources and living standards, or how people have been affected by economic development. Each country's position/rank on population size, GDP per capita (in purchasing power parities), and population below the poverty line is noted. Then attention shifts to the economies (size, structure, and rates of growth). Having noted the marked variation in the economies, as well as the differentials in human resources and living standards, reasons of and causes for this variation are suggested. In conclusion, reference is made to the debate about "near NICs" and to the importance of Japan (and increasingly China) to the continued economic development of Southeast Asia.

Article reading: Lewellen, T. "Dependency and development"(ER)

Who Governs in Southeast Asia?

Description: This lecture covers political issues in each of the contemporary Southeast Asian nations. The area is analyzed in terms of communist, military-authoritarian, and semi-democratic governments with the emphasis on the differences and similarities within the Southeast Asian region. Given the rapid changes in the region, this lecture changes each semester to deal with current events.

Text reading: Neher, Ch. 6: “Recent History and Politics” and Ch.7 “Leaders”

Discussion and Review

Final Exam, Thurs. May 8, Noon-1:50 p.m.