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POLS 322
POLITICS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA
Spring 2014
TTh 4-5:15
Tarbutton 105

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Course Description

This course explores political and economic developments in Southeast Asia – the region encompassing the peninsulas between India and China, as well as the Philippine and Indonesian archipelagoes. The region's economic prominence is reflected in its consistently high growth rates (several of its countries were labeled by the World Bank as "High Performing Asian Economies" in 1993), by the prominence of Malaysia and Singapore as global exporters of high-tech electronics, by Thailand's position as one of the world's leading producers of rice, rubber, sugar, textiles, hard disk drives, and even pick-up trucks, and by "market-socialist" Vietnam's emergence as one of the world's largest exporters of coffee. Alongside this economic growth has been a generally impressive reduction in poverty and increase on "human development indicators" (education and health, along with income). There are also problems: inequality has worsened in a number of cases; environmental performance has been weak; and there are concerns about "middle-income traps" (discussed below).

Political shifts, including democratization, are occurring throughout the region, albeit at an uneven pace. In the Philippines (in 1986) and Indonesia (in 1998), for example, popular movements and competitive elections replaced authoritarian rulers in power for decades. . Burma has been in transition from decades of authoritarian rule by an unelected military junta to an elected, largely civilian government. Thailand's politics are marked by a combination of competitive elections, lots of new constitutions (17 since 1932), frequent coups (over 15 since 1932), and growing socio-political conflicts. Singapore operates under a one-party government and Malaysia an increasingly shaky Malay-dominated coalition; both countries hold elections with varying degrees of competitiveness. Vietnam and Laos are governed by unelected socialist parties and Cambodia by an authoritarian party.

These developments have taken place in the context of diverse cultural traditions and strategic pressures. The Philippines is largely Catholic; Buddhism is the dominant religion in most of mainland Southeast Asia; and Islam is the dominant religion in three of the region's countries -- Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia (the world's largest Muslim country), as well as in southern Philippines and southern Thailand. The Islamic presence, combined with some significant problems of poverty and inequality, has given rise to concerns about fundamentalism and terrorism in certain areas. The region is also characterized by numerous ethnic minorities, including both hill tribes and economically powerful Chinese. Strategically, the Southeast Asian countries must contend with both Japan, an increasingly influential China, and a U.S. struggling to adjust to a new and challenging regional security environment.

The region is thus both fascinating in and of itself and an ideal laboratory through which to explore key issues in political and economic development. My general goals in this class are thus to acquaint you with Southeast Asia *and* to stimulate your interest in broader issues of comparative politics relevant to all developing countries.

As with any region-based course, the challenge is to balance breadth with depth of coverage. I have opted to go more for depth. As such, the course is divided into four general components. The first provides an historical overview of the region from pre-colonial to post-independence periods. The second, third, and fourth delve more deeply into the major political issues relating to three countries: Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam:

Indonesia - Politics and Islam: Indonesia, with a population of over 250 million, is the largest Muslim country in the world. Yet the origins and characteristics of Islam in Indonesia differ significantly from those in the Middle East and North Africa. Most observers emphasize the relatively moderate nature of Islam in Indonesia, although this characterization is now being questioned. How do we explain these differences? How enduring are they? What are their consequences for both Indonesia's political development and our broader understanding of Islam as a political force?

Thailand - Politics and Development in a Rising Middle-Income Developing Country: Thailand has embraced globalization and has been one of the fastest-growing countries in the developing world. Yet the country has experienced growing political disorder, rural-urban inequality, volatile labor markets, a weak education/training system, and political fragmentation. Further, observers have raised concerns that Thailand is falling into a "middle-income trap." What kinds of political arrangements have facilitated Thai development up to now? To what extent are these arrangements appropriate for new development challenges, especially in the context of shifting globalization pressures?

Vietnam - Political Challenges of a Socialist Transitions: After the "American War," Vietnam turned to the tasks of political consolidation and economic stabilization and growth. Can the Communist Party of Vietnam maintain its dominant political position as it pursues economic growth without giving rise to social forces that challenge its very power? Viewed comparatively, can Vietnam's ruling party emulate the performance of its Chinese counterpart?

As should be clear from this description, the course has a heavy component of political economy. While economic policies and issues will play a prominent role in some of the readings and lectures, you are not expected to have a background in economics. However, you will need to learn some new economic concepts during the semester. It is impossible to study the interaction between politics and economics without first introducing some terms from economics. Every effort will be made to explain unfamiliar terms in class. Please don't hesitate to ask questions if you encounter an unfamiliar concept.

I also do not expect you to enter the course with previous knowledge of Southeast Asia. I do expect you to have some background in comparative politics and/or international relations. I also expect you to complete the assigned reading prior to the class in which we discuss the assignment, and to ask questions when you do not understand something. As an upper-division course, there is a moderate reading load – between 80-100 pages a week. This is especially important because roughly 1/3-1/2 of the class sessions will be devoted to discussing the readings.

Course Requirements

1. Map Quiz: 5% of final grade. See attached page.

2. Exams: 45% of final grade. The midterm (20%) and final (25%) will include 1) short answer / identification questions to be completed in class, and 2) a take-home essay. The goal of these exams is to ensure that you have covered key concepts, themes, names, events, etc. of the course. The midterm will be on March 25; the final May 5, 11:30-2pm..

3. Class participation: 15% of final grade. Attendance is not mandatory. But since class discussion is a large percentage of the grade, and since the exams will be drawn from lectures and discussions, absences will inevitably result in a lower grade. This is especially the case since I will typically call on students to answer questions. The role of student participation in class discussion is especially important, since the class is modeled in part like a law school or business school class. Roughly 1/3- 1/2 of the class sessions is devoted to discussing and analyzing the readings. The discussions are based on student responses to questions drawn from the assigned readings (most of these questions will be distributed in advance on the Blackboard site). The goals of these sessions include 1) ensuring that you have read the assigned material; 2) identifying and clarifying questions; 3) demonstrating links among the issues and stimulating your interest in research on particular questions; and 4) strengthening your ability to express yourself in front of a group of students (especially without using the word “like” every 5 second).

There will be pop quizzes in case of a lack of student preparation.

4. Policy memo: 35% of final grade. This is a 5-7 page paper that will analyze and suggest alternative strategies to address a policy challenge in Southeast Asia. The challenge can be a regional one, such as conflicts over the Spratly Islands or environmental consequences of forest fires in Indonesia. It can be a national (or local) one, such as the current conflict between “red” and “yellow” shirts in Thailand, shifting development policy in Singapore, or corruption in Malaysia. The challenge can involve a range of issues, such as national security (military, food), public health, education, or religious conflict. Whatever the issue, the paper must 1) identify the specific challenge; 2) provide historical background; 3) analyze the *political* aspects of the challenge (i.e. identify key actors and their interests, the institutions through which decisions are made); and 4) propose a policy / strategy to resolve the challenge.

The proposal is to be addressed to decision makers in a public, private, not-for-profit, or public-private organization (e.g. at the U.S. State or Defense Dept., the Foreign Ministry of Singapore, the International Labour Organization, the Thai Ministry of Public Health, the Gates Foundation, CARE, the World Bank, General Motors). The proposal should draw on at least five published, scholarly sources found in the library (books, articles in academic or specialized journals, not websites) and include a bibliography. Keep in mind that **40%** of the final paper grade is based on the quality of your writing: grammar, spelling, structure, overall clarity of expression.

You must get instructor approval for your topic. This involves coming to talk with me and/or Mr. Tans by March 6, and submitting a 1-page proposal by March 20. Failure to meet and submit a proposal will result in a 10 point reduction in the final paper grade.

Course Policies and Procedures

Students with Disabilities: Any student with special needs because of a disability is requested to speak with the instructor by the end of Week 2.

Readings and Lectures: All readings for this course are mandatory. If you attend class, but do not complete the readings, or if you complete the readings, but do not attend class, you are likely to receive a poor grade. The lectures are designed to complement—not simply to review—the assigned readings.

Examination Policies: Note the map quiz, midterm and final exam dates. No makeup exams will be given without prior approval of the instructor at least two weeks before the quiz/exam date/deadline or without a doctor's note submitted to the professor within 1 week of the quiz/exam.

Plagiarism and Cheating: You are expected to familiarize yourself with and to follow the Emory Student Honor Code. You should be aware that exam essays paper will be randomly examined through a plagiarism-detection tool.

Electronic Devices: To facilitate focused and uninterrupted discussion, please terminate all cell phone discussions upon entering the classroom; turn off or silence ring tones of all cell phones, Blackberries, etc. while in the classroom; and refrain from texting, IMing, or otherwise communicating electronically for the duration of each class session. *Laptops may not be used in class* (unless required for reasons of disability). I have adopted this rule to encourage you to focus on the class rather than on the screen.

REQUIRED READINGS

The books listed below are required and can be purchased at the university bookstore. Most readings will be available through the course Blackboard site. Assume that articles from academic journals will be available through the library's e-journals site.

Bill Hayton. *Vietnam: Rising Dragon*. New Haven: Yale University Press 2011.

Robert Dayley and Clark D. Neher (DN). *Southeast Asia in the New International Era*. Westview Press, 6th edition, 2013.

Robert Pringle. *Understanding Islam in Indonesia: Politics and Diversity*. University of Hawaii Press 2010.

Also useful as a general background reference is: Norman G. Owen, ed. *The Emergence of Modern Southeast Asia: A New History*. University of Hawai'i Press 2005.

POLITICS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA
Spring 2014
WEEKLY SCHEDULE
Jan. 9, 2014

- 1. Jan. 14** **Introduction to Southeast Asia and Key Issues**
Dayley and Neher (DN), Ch. 1 (pp. 1-24).
- 2. Jan. 21, 23** **Colonialism and Migrations**
Williams, Chs. 5-7
Carl A. Trocki, "Drugs, Taxes, and Chinese Capitalism in Southeast Asia," In Timothy Brook and Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi (eds.), *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
- 3. Jan. 28, 30** **Snow!!**
- 4. Feb. 4, 6** **Nationalism and Revolution**
Williams, Chs. 9-11
- 5. Feb. 11, 13** **SNOW!!**
- 6. Feb. 18, 20** **Indonesia: Diversity and Political Evolution (Tans); Social Science Methods; Map Quiz (Feb. 20)**
DN, Chs. 8, 9 (pp. 223-276)
Michael Ross, "Oil, Islam and Women." *American Political Science Review*.(9/2008).
Jared Diamond, "Intra-Island and Inter-Island Comparisons, in Jared Diamond and James Robinson, *Natural Experiments of History* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2010), pp. 120-142.
- 7. Feb. 25, 27** **Indonesia: Islam's Origins and Diversity (Tans – Feb. 25)**
Pringle, Chs. 1-4
- 8. March 4, 6** **Indonesia: Pol. Development / Decentralization (Tans)**
Pringle, Chs. 5-8
- March 6** **Deadline to meet with instructors on policy memo**
- 9. March 11, 13** **Spring Break**
- 10. March 18, 20** **Thailand: Background**
DN, Ch. 3 (pp 27-72)
Benedict Anderson, "Murder and Progress in Modern Siam," *New Left Review*, 81:2 (1990), 33-48
- March 20** **Deadline to turn in 1-page proposal**
- 11. March 25, 27** **Guest Lecture: Claire Hefner; turn in exam essay (March 25)**
In-class short ID exam (March 27)

12. April 1, 3

Thailand: Economics of the Middle-Income Trap

Somchai, Jitsuchon, “Thailand in a Middle-Income Trap.” *TDRI Quarterly Review*. June 2012, pp. 13-20 (available online).

UNDP. *Thailand Human Development Report 2007*, pp. 2-17.

Somchai Jitsuchon, “Fiscal cost and Thailand’s redistribution policies,” *East Asia Forum*, December 31st, 2011 <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2011/12/31/fiscal-cost-and-thailands-redistribution-policies/>

Peter Warr, “Thai Populism: A dead end route,” *East Asia Forum*, May 11, 2011. <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2011/05/11/19026/>

Supplementary:

Hewison. 2012. "Class, inequality and politics," In Montesano, Pavin and Aekapol eds., *Perspectives on a divided Thailand* 143-160 (Singapore: ISEAS)

Emmanuel Jiminez, Vy Nguyen, Harry Patrinos, "Stuck in the Middle? Human Capital Development and Economic Growth in Malaysia and Thailand," *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper* 6283. very good on sequencing

13. April 8, 10

Thailand: Politics of the Middle-Income Trap

Kevin Hewison, “Crafting Thailand’s New Social Contract,” *The Pacific Review* 17, no. 4 (2004): 503-522.

Pasuk Pongpaichit and Chris Baker. "Thaksin's Populism" *Journal of Contemporary Asia*. 38:1 (February 2008), pp. 62-83).

Thitinan Pongsudirak, TBA

14. April 15, 17

Vietnam: Origins of Revolutionary Nationalism

DN, Ch. 5 (pp. 105-136)

Hayton, Epilogue (pp. 226-228), Chs.4, 5 (pp. 68-112).

15. April 22, 24

Vietnam: Challenges of Socialist Transitions

Hayton, entire book

Supplementary:

Frizen, Scott. 2002. “Growth, inequality and the future of poverty reduction in Vietnam.” *Journal of Asian Economics* 13, pp. 635-657.

Final Exam

Deadline for Policy Memo

May 5, 2014 / 11:30-2pm

May 9, 2014 / 5:pm

Map Quiz

"Without geography you're nowhere." Jimmy Buffett

Students will be handed the attached map and must be able to identify the following items. Use an atlas or one of the various online services (for example <http://www.worldatlas.com/aatlas/world.htm>) to fill out your practice map. Students can take practice quizzes at <http://www.harper.cc.il.us/mhealy/mapquiz/seasia/semenu.htm> or <http://www.maps.com/FunFacts.aspx?nav=MS#> .

COUNTRIES:

Brunei
Cambodia
East Timor
Indonesia
Laos
Malaysia
Myanmar (Burma)
Philippines
Singapore
Thailand
Vietnam

CAPITALS:

Bandar Seri Begawan
Bangkok
Dili
Hanoi
Jakarta
Kuala Lumpur
Putrajaya
Phnom Penh
Naypidaw
Vientiane

LAND BODIES:

Aceh
Borneo
Java
Khorat Plateau
Luzon
Mekong Delta
Mindanao
New Guinea
Spratly Islands
Bali
Sulawesi
Sumatra
Southern Thailand Muslim Provinces
(Yala, Narathiwat, Pattani)

RIVERS:

Chao Phraya River
Irrawaddy River
Mekong River
Red River
Salween River

WATER BODIES:

Strait of Malacca
Andaman Sea
Gulf of Tonkin
Indian Ocean
Pacific Ocean
South China Sea