Human Geography of Southeast Asia

(Geography of China and Southeast Asia)

GEOGRAPHY 358
3 credits

January 21 – May 9, 2014

Lectures: 2:30-3:45 pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays
SCIENCE HALL 360

Course Instructor:
Dr. Ian Baird, Office: Science Hall 455
e-mail: ibaird@wisc.edu or tel: 608-265-0012 (office)
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:15-2:15 pm
or by appointment (via e-mail)

Introduction

Southeast Asia is a diverse region presently containing 11 nation states (Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar (Burma), Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore and Timor Leste), and arguably the southern-most part of China, especially Yunnan Province. Within those countries a large number of peoples self-identify as members of a wide variety of ethnic groups. Some of these are found across national borders, such as the Hmong, Akha and Brao, to name just a few, while a smaller number are found in only a single country, such as the Lua of Thailand and the Lavi from Laos. Religious and class differences are also important factors, as are livelihoods and politics. The human geography of Southeast Asia is dynamic and experiencing rapid change, thus making it a particularly interesting part of the world.

This survey course is designed to introduce intermediary undergraduate students to the human geography of Southeast Asia, including the basic geography and history of the region, important political and theoretical issues, and policies and positionings of relevance for understanding the human spatiality of the region, including the ways that ethnicity and indigeneity are being evoked in Southeast Asia and amongst Southeast Asians in the USA.

The main objective of this course is to help students gain a good basic understanding of ethnic diversity and ethnic politics in Southeast Asia, as well as to gain a general understanding of transnational politics in the USA related to Southeast Asia, especially associated with the Hmong and Lao, but also in relation to other groups as well.
Course Texts


Evaluation and Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Assignment #1</th>
<th>10%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignment #2</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Assignment #3</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fun fact</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term Exams</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
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1) **Writing Assignments**: 40%. To pass the course, every student is required to complete three short concise writing assignments (double spaced, Time New Roman 12 point font, standard margins). Chicago style in-text referencing should be used (not footnotes or endnotes). These assignments are due at the beginning of class (papers handed in during class or at the end of class will be considered to be one day late) on Tuesday, February 11, Thursday, March 13, and Thursday, May 1. Topics will be discussed during class. The first paper will be no more than 1,000 words long. The second and third papers will be no more than 1,200 words each (write the word count on the paper). Hard copies must be handed in, and all pages should be stapled together. E-mail submissions will not be accepted (except under exceptional circumstances, and with prior permission). Printing on two sides of the paper is acceptable, and while not required, is encouraged. There will be a 10% penalty for every calendar day any of the papers are late. There are no exceptions to this apart from cases of documented serious health problems or other documented emergencies that delay the completion of an assignment.

2) **Fun fact**: 5%. Everyone in the class is required to make a five minute presentation about something interesting related to ethnic identities that they have learned on their own about the human geography of Southeast Asia. Scheduling will be done with Ian Baird at least one class in advance. These short presentations will be followed by 5-10 minutes of discussion with the class.

3) **Mid-term exams**: 30%. There will be two mid-term exams during the course during regular class time, on Tuesday, February 18 and Tuesday, April 1. The
first exam will cover the lecture material and required course readings up to the
time of the exam. The second exam will cover the lecture and reading material
between the first exam and the second. It will not be enough to concentrate either
exclusively on the reading material or the lecture material. Students will need to
have a good understanding of both to be successful. The exams will largely be
multiple-choice, along with some short answer questions.

4) **Final exam:** 25%. The final exam will take place during the exam period, on May
11th, 2014, 10:05 am to 12:05 pm. It will cover all the lecture and readings for the
course, with an emphasis on the course content after the second mid-term. The
exam will largely be multiple-choice. Some short answer questions will also be
included. Students who miss the final exam cannot make it up unless their failure to
take the exam was caused by a serious health problem or other fully documented and
verifiable emergency.

**Good writing is important:** I appreciate good writing, and will reward those who
demonstrate their ability to write well and concisely. Please remember that your papers
should all include a clear thesis statement. If you are not a good writer, consider
requesting support from the UW-Madison Writing Center for improving your writing
skills.

**Grading**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>82-89</td>
<td>AB</td>
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<tr>
<td>74-81</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>66-73</td>
<td>BC</td>
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<td>58-65</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>51-57</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
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**Conduct in Class**

Students are encouraged to ask questions and make comments in Lecture. Being frank is
fine, but it is also important that we are respectful of the views of others. Please put up your
hand in you want to ask a question or make a comment, and I will try to get to you as soon
as possible, without overly interrupting the flow of the lecture.

Students are allowed to use laptop computers in class to take notes or engage in other class-
related activities. Students SHOULD NOT, however, use laptops in class to chat with
friends, surf the web about non-class related topics, write e-mails, play computer cards or
chess, etc. This can be very distracting for both the lecturer and other students so please
strictly follow these rules. Also, please do not engage in any cell phone text messaging or
other electronic means of communication during class time.
**Academic Integrity**

Students who plagiarize should beware, as the UW-Madison policy on plagiarizing will be strictly implemented during this course. Students are responsible for educating themselves on this. Plagiarizing can lead to serious consequences for students, including resulting in students receiving failing grades or other serious discipline. Cheating of all kind will not be tolerated. Students who are aware that other students are cheating are encouraged to report inappropriate actions. Anonymity can be assured, when appropriate.

**Life Interruptions**

Students are expected to submit work at the times scheduled in the syllabus. Possible exceptions include serious illness, immediate family emergency, or other legitimate conflict. If these apply, you must contact me to request an extension or makeup. Make these arrangements as soon as you know of the conflict—**before** the due date if possible. Students who miss the final exam cannot make it up unless their failure to take the exam was caused by a serious health problem or other fully documented and verifiable emergency. All make-up exams will be essay exams.

**Special Needs**

It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me and the McBurney Resource Center located at 702 W. Johnson Street, Suite 2104 [http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu](http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu), 608-263-2741 to discuss individual needs for accommodations.
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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| 1   | Tuesday, January 21, 2014 | Course introduction  
Review syllabus, course objectives and content, course readings, assignments, etc.  
| 2   | Thursday, January 23, 2014 | Introduction to the Human Geography of Southeast Asia  
Review the countries in Southeast Asia and the recent human geography of the region.  
| 3   | Tuesday, January 28, 2014 | Introduction to the Colonial and Post-Colonial History of Southeast Asia  
| 4   | Thursday, January 30, 2014 | Imagined Communities  
| 5   | Tuesday, February 4 | Ethnic Groups and Boundaries  
6 Thursday, February 6

Rethinking Ethnicity


7 Tuesday, February 11

Contested Social Memory


Paper 1 Due

8 Thursday, February 13

Upland and Lowland Peoples in Southeast Asia


Optional


9 Tuesday, February 18

Mid-Term 1

10 Thursday, February 20

Ethnic Groups and Policies in Laos


11 Tuesday, February 25

Ethnic Groups and Policies in Cambodia

12
Thursday, February 27


Optional


13
Tuesday, March 4


13
Thursday, March 6


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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Reads</th>
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| 17         | Thursday | Chinese in Southeast Asia                    | Guest Speaker: Michael Cullinane  
Mackie, Jamie. Introduction.  
Optional  
<p>| 18         | Tuesday  | Mid-Term 2                                   |                                                                       |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>19</th>
<th>Thursday, April 3</th>
<th>Colonialism and Ethnicity in Asia</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Tuesday, April 8</td>
<td>Ethnic Groups and Policies in Myanmar</td>
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<td>Guest Speaker: Peter Swift</td>
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<td>To be provided later.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Thursday, April 10</td>
<td>Guest Speaker – TBA</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Tuesday, April 15</td>
<td>Ethnicity and Spatial Organization</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Optional</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Thursday, April 17</td>
<td>Indigeneity in Southeast Asia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day</td>
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<td>Date Details</td>
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Papers #3 due |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Thursday, May 8</td>
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**Hmong and Lao Veterans Politics in the USA**

Baird, Ian G. and Paul Hillmer 2013 (In Preparation). Hmong and Lao veterans politics in the USA. To be submitted to *Social and Cultural Geography*.

* Note that during the course it is possible that some of the lectures will have their dates changed, or contents altered. We will try to provide as much advance warning of changes as possible.