

**HH2001:
SINGAPORE: THE MAKING OF A COSMOPOLITAN CITY-STATE
(SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

HH2001 Singapore: The Making of a Cosmopolitan City-state

[Seminars: 39 hours; Academic Unit: 3.0]

Learning Objective

1. Introducing key processes, forces and individuals in shaping modern Singapore;
2. Enhancing students' analytical capacity in interpreting historical events since 1819 from a regional and global perspective;
3. Demonstrating the importance of how history is a crucial force in the formation of a national identity for a young country such as Singapore

Content

This course focuses on the history of Singapore in the regional and global contexts. It will discuss various factors--institutional, cultural, socio-political and international—that have shaped the trajectory of Singapore over the past seven decades. The successful story of Singapore's economic development will be understood within the domestic multi-ethnic mosaic and complex regional relationships. It is the interplay of these forces that underscores the emergence and challenges of a cosmopolitan global city-state with an emerging national identity.

Course Outline

Seminar I: Introduction: Changing Approaches to Singapore History (19th August)

This seminar discusses the different approaches to Singapore History. Beginning with official textbooks of national histories, we survey the different approaches to the historiography of Singapore, focusing on alternative readings and framings of Singapore's history. This section lays the foundation for the discussions of the subsequent weeks by questioning the concepts of "Singapore" and "History".

Kevin Blackburn, "Mary Turnbull's History Textbook for the Singapore Nation"; Karl Hack, 'Framing the History of Singapore'; Thum, P. J., "The Limitations of Monolingual History"; Milner, Anthony, "Singapore's Role in Constituting the 'Malay' Narrative"; Wang Gungwu, "Two Perspectives of Southeast Asian Studies: Singapore and China."
Heng & Khairudin, *Singapore in Global History*.

Seminar II: Singapore Before 1819: Place, Region, and World (26th August) [POSSIBLY ASIAN CIVILIZATIONS MUSEUM]

This seminar discusses the history of "Singapore" before 1819, examining the earliest references to "Singapore" and names often associated with the place, and the sources from which they are drawn. It also examines the early history of the Malay world region, and the ways in which

Singapore was a part of this history, and played important roles in historical events, accounts, and imaginations of the region. This section also surveys the early Malay world polities associated with Singapore as well as the place of Singapore in the early European imperial projects in the region. In so doing, it raises questions about the older national historiography of Singapore.

Kwa. *Locating Singapore on the Maritime Silk Road*. Borschberg. *The Singapore and Melaka Straits: violence, security, and diplomacy*. Derek Heng.

Seminar IV: Introduction to the collections of National Library (2nd September) @ NATIONAL LIBRARY

We will visit the National Library to have a librarian introduce the collections to us. The librarian will cover the major collections on Singapore and also discuss materials relating to topics that you have in mind.

Seminar III: Entrepot and Empire: Trade, Colonialism, and Plural Society (9th September)

This seminar examines the founding of the British Port on Singapore, and the rise of Singapore as a regional entrepot. It analyses this rise in the context of the changing world economy and European imperial expansion in the region. It examines how trade was a constant factor in the imperial contest for Southeast Asia, and the structures of the colonial economy that emerged as part of the new modern industrial capitalist world-system.

Turnbull, *A History of Singapore, 1819-2005*. "Introduction" & "The Splendid Little Colony"; Wong, Lin Ken, "*The Strategic significance of Singapore in modern history*"; Wong, Lin Ken, *The trade of Singapore 1819-1867*; Huff. *The Economic Growth of Singapore*.

Field Trip 1: CHINATOWN TOUR (16th September)

Students will be divided into groups to tour Chinatown, and each group will introduce a landmark/site to the rest of the class. They will be allocated the site/landmark and asked to do research on the site prior to the visit, and prepare handouts for the tour of the respective site.

Submission of Group Documentation Project (15th September)

Submission of Individual Paper Annotated Bibliographies (20th September)

Seminar IV: Roads to Independence: A Moment of Anguish and Creating State and Nation in a Cold War World (23rd September)

This seminar examines the Japanese Occupation and the debates and contestations over the future of Singapore between the 1940s and the 1970s, in the context of global processes of decolonization

and the Cold War. It explores the background to Singapore's merger with Malaysia, its separation, and the post-colonial legacies of empire and Separation.

Barr and Trocki, eds., *Paths Not Taken: Political Pluralism in Singapore*; Liu and Wong, *Singapore Chinese Society in Transition*. Lee Kuan Yew. *From third world to first: the Singapore story, 1965-2000*; Edwin Lee, *Singapore*.

Term Break

Seminar V: Development, Multiculturalism, and Asian Values: The Travails of Nation-Building (7th October)

In this session, we shall discuss the nation-building process in Singapore after 1965, exploring the issues of economic development, social and cultural change, and the anxieties, visions, and debates underlying these transformations. It explores the ways in which the programme and policies of "development" were closely tied to socio-cultural and educational projects, and the ideologies of Multiculturalism and Asian Values. It examines the impact of such policies on the social, political, and economic structures of Singapore, and the success of such nation-building programmes.

Huff, *The Economic Growth of Singapore*; Goh Keng Swee, *The Practice of Economic Growth*. Lee Kuan Yew. *From third world to first*

Field Trip 2: KAMPONG GLAM & MALAY HERITAGE CENTRE (14th October)

***Seminar VI: Singapore, Region, and World: The Cold War, ASEAN and "Asia" in historical perspective (21st October)* > [Possible Visit to ISEAS Library]**

This seminar examines the significance of region and the world in the political, economic, and socio-cultural imaginations, processes, and structures underlying the history of Singapore after 1945. It examines the impact of the Cold War on Singapore, as well as Singapore's role in the processes of regionalization during this period. It also examines the growing importance of "Asia" in the debates about value systems and identities in Singapore vis-à-vis the processes of globalization.

Thompson, Mark R., "Whatever Happened to 'Asian Values'?". *Journal of Democracy* 12.4 (2001): 154-165.

Field Trip 3: LITTLE INDIA (28 October)

Seminar VII: The End of History? Heritage, Region and the Global Present (4th November): Possible Visit to National Museum

This seminar brings the discussion to the present-day and explores how the new processes of globalization since the 1990s, the continued quest for economic development and intergenerational change under the new nation-building programmes have raised brought rapid social, cultural, and economic changes precipitating new modes of consciousness and social engagement, as well as new questions of identity, history, and heritage. What significance does history and the knowledge and interpretation of Singapore's history have for the future of Singapore as a nation?

Kong, Lil & Brenda Yeoh. "Recreating the past, reconstructing the nation". P. 131-161.

Submission of final individual papers (3rd November 2019)

GROUP DOCUMENTATION PROJECT PRESENTATIONS (11th November)

Submission of Group Documentation Project Portfolios (18th November)

Learning Outcome

Apart from familiarizing key processes in Singapore's recent history, the students will be able to understand the significance of history in shaping national and cultural identity and a variety of factors contributing to Singapore's success so far (and the challenges it faces). They will be able to develop analytic skills in interpreting the past events and their continuous relevance.

Student Assessment

Seminar/Field Trip Group Presentations and other class assignments	30%
Singapore History Individual Paper Project (Annotated bibliography 10% + Actual Essay 25%)	35%
Singapore History Group Documentation Project (Proposal = 5%, Portfolio = Footage/Photos/Primary Materials = 20%, Final Presentation = 10%)	35%

Seminar Presentations

For the seminar presentations, the class will be divided into groups. You will get to form your own groups. Each group will present a reading as part of a broader discussion each week. Each group might be expected to question or critique other presentations as part of the exercise. This arrangement might be subjected to change, depending on the size of the class.

Field Trips

For each field trip, the seminar groups might be asked to lead the tour, preparing handouts based on research prior to the trip. .

SINGAPORE HISTORY Group Documentation Project: The group documentation project will be about any aspect of Singapore history. Students will be expected to work as a group to identify a key aspect of Singapore's past, to conduct an oral history and audio-visual documentation project based on this theme/personality/event/company/organization. The culmination of this project will be a group presentation. You are free to choose any topic, in consultation with the instructor.

SINGAPORE HISTORY FINAL PAPER PROJECT: The final paper will consist of an annotated bibliography and the actual essay. It will be based on a topic of your own choice about any aspect of Singapore history. It can be about any topic or theme. The Major Essay should be chosen in consultation with the instructor. The student will then compile and submit an annotated bibliography, which will consist of an introduction outlining the topic, the questions he or she is going to deal with, and a possible hypothesis. Instructions for the annotated bibliography will be announced in class. The actual essay will be a paper of at least 3,500 words (excluding bibliography).

REFERENCE TEXTS

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