

Global Seminar-Hanoi
Vietnam: The War and Beyond
Summer 2010

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The 20th century wars in Vietnam have left indelible marks around the world, from the coup de grace it delivered to French (and most European) imperialism, to the exceptional divisiveness of American politics, and, of course, mostly to Vietnam itself. In this course, we look at the legacies of the Vietnam War, considering not only the physical consequences of this period of brutal and intense combat but also the ways in which the war has been turned into a variety of narratives elsewhere. By setting the course in Hanoi, we will be able to take advantage of the rich history and culture of Vietnam's capital, and the home of a number of important historical sites, museums, and memorials recording the official histories of the combat. We will also take two major trips allowing us to see other areas of planning, conspiracy, and violence, set against the astonishingly beautiful landscapes of Vietnam. And we will turn to the social, political, cultural, and economic issues facing contemporary Vietnam as well.

The course will consist of six weeks of lectures and language classes, held at the Letters & Sciences Campus of Vietnam National University-Hanoi.

The following books will be available for purchase at Labyrinth Books:

Vietnam: A History (Penguin), by Stanley Karnow
The Vietnam Wars, 1945-1990 (Harper Perennial), by Marilyn Young
Ho Chi Minh: A Life (Hyperion), by William Duiker

The American War in Contemporary Vietnam (Indiana University Press), by Christina Schwenkel
Dumb Luck (Univ. of Michigan Press), by Vu Trong Phung
The Sorrow of War (Riverhead Books), by Bao Ninh
Even the Women Must Fight (Wiley), by Karen Gottshang Turner with Phan Thanh Hao

All of the last four are required texts. Students may choose any of the first three (Karnow, Young, Duiker) to read before course. The course will begin with a discussion of the narrativization of the war, and each student will be expected to turn in a 3-5 pp. book review of the book (Karnow or Young or Duiker) that she or he chose to prepare. Young's is the shortest but is also quite complicated, focusing largely (and critically) on the global political context for the war. Karnow's is longer, but a very readable book that details the American decisions in this long conflict. Duiker's is long as well, but is the best reference in English about the life of Ho Chi Minh, who was not only one of the most important people of the 20th century but also absolutely essential both to the war itself and to its memorialization in contemporary Vietnam.

The remaining four books will be available at Labyrinth, though it is easy to purchase copies of *The Sorrow of War* very inexpensively in Hanoi itself.

The assignments for the course are:

Book report (3-5 pp.): 10%
Midterm Exam: 20%
Research Paper (12-15 pp.): 30%
Final Exam: 25%

Class participation: 10%

Monday, June 14: Introduction and Narratives of Conflict

Book reviews due.

Tuesday, June 15 – Total War

Even the Women Must Fight, Chapters 1-3

Wednesday, June 16 – War, Power, Gender

- *Even the Women Must Fight*, Chapters 4-6
- Vo Nguyen Giap, *People's War, People's Army*, pp. 9-38

Thursday, June 17 – From Military to Social

Even the Women Must Fight, Chapters 7-9

Weekend trip to the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, Stilt House, and Museum

Monday, June 21: Marxist Thought, Communist Organization in Vietnam

- *Vietnam: Revolution in Transition*, William Duiker, pp 1-43
- *Vietnam's Tradition on Trial 1920-1945*, David Marr, pp 1-88
- Lenin, "Communism and the East: Theses on the National and Colonial Questions," in *The Lenin Anthology*, pp. 619-625.
- "The Path Which Led me to Leninism," by Ho Chi Minh

Tuesday, June 22: French Imperialism

- William Duiker, "The Rise of the Revolutionary Movement," in *The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam*, pp. 6-43. (on blackboard)
- Ngo Vinh Long: *Before the Revolution* (selections)
- Hue-Tam Ho Tai, Chapter 8, "Communists, Trotskyists, and Progressives" (pp. 224-257); (on blackboard) Conclusion (pp. 258-263), in *Radicalism and the Origins of the Vietnamese Revolution*.(on blackboard)

Wednesday, June 23: The War Against the French

- Hue-Tam Ho Tai, Chapter 8, "Communists, Trotskyists, and Progressives" (pp. 224-257); (on blackboard) Conclusion (pp. 258-263), in *Radicalism and the Origins of the Vietnamese Revolution*.(on blackboard)
- Ho Chi Minh, "French Colonization on Trial," in *On Revolution*, pp. 68-123
- 1945 Declaration of Independence
- Begin Reading *Dumb Luck*

Afternoon film at Cinematheque

Thursday, June 24: Depart for Cao Bang province

Complete reading *Dumb Luck* during drive up

Friday, June 25- Sunday June 27:

Travel to Cao Bang, including visits to Pac Bo Caves — where Ho Chi Minh planned the war in the early 1940s — and to Ban Gioc Waterfall

Monday, June 28: American Entry into the war

- Gary Hess, Chapter 3, “To Dien Bien Phu: The United States and the French Vietnam War, 1946-1954,” pp 38-50 in *Vietnam and the United States, Origins and Legacy of War*.
- *Vietnam and America*, pp 3-18, Marvin Gettleman, Jane Franklin, Marilyn Young, and Bruce Franklin
- *Communist Road to Power*, pp 1-85, William Duiker
- Geneva Cease Fire and Final Declaration of Geneva Conference
- *Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam*, Mark Bradley, selections

Tuesday, June 29: The War in the South

- *Vietnam and America*, pp 193-226, 255-291, Gettleman et al
- *Letters to the South*, pp 1-16, Secretary General Le Duan
- Founding Program of the NLF
- “No Other Road to Take,” Nguyen Thi Dinh, Excerpt

Screening of *Hearts and Minds* (3:30 p.m)

Wednesday, June 30:

The Sorrow of War, entire
Visit to class by Bao Ninh, author of *The Sorrow of War*

Thursday, July 1:

Midterm Exam (at hotel)

Free weekend. Likely July 4th festivities (optional) at Hanoi American Club.

Monday, July 5:

Tet, pp 41-76, 158-196, 237-277, Don Oberdorfer

Tuesday, July 6:

- *The My Lai Massacre in American History and Memory*, Kendrick Oliver, Chapters 1, 5
- *The American War in Contemporary Vietnam*, Christina Schwenkel, Chapters 1, 3

Screening of *Sound of the Violin at My Lai* at Cinematheque with visit by Tran Van Thuy to discuss film

Wednesday, July 7 – Sunday July 11:

Travel to Hue, Tour of the DMZ, Visits to My Lai Museum and Peace Park, China Beach, Hoi An

Monday, July 12: “Vietnamization”

Vietnam and America, pp 427-470, Gettleman, et al.

Tuesday, July 13: Accords and Withdrawal

- *Vietnam and America*, 471-515 (includes Paris Accords) and: *The Great Spring Victory: an Account of the Liberation of South Vietnam 1975*, (495-515), General Van Tien Dung/Gettleman, et al

PM Visit to Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development on the outskirts of Hanoi (by Bach Mai hospital) to meet with Phung Tuu Boi about “green fences” that contain dioxin contamination and to see reforestation and former bomb sites in HN

Wednesday, July 14:

The American War in Contemporary Vietnam, Introduction and Chapters 2 and 4

Thursday, July 15:

The American War in Contemporary Vietnam, Chapters 5, 6

Free weekend in Hanoi – Work on those Papers!

Monday, July 19:

The American War in Contemporary Vietnam, Conclusion
Research Paper Due

Tuesday, July 20: Rethinking War and Its Legacies

- “Wandering Ghosts of Late Socialism: Conflict, Metaphor, and Memory in a Southern Vietnamese Marketplace” Ann Marie Leshkovich, (*Journal of Asian Studies* 67:1 (2008): 5-41.
- “History Interrupted: Life after Material Death in South Vietnamese and Diasporic Works of Fiction,” Nguyen-Vo Thu-Huong, *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* Feb 2008, Vol. 3, No. 1: 1–35.

Wednesday, July 21: The Path to Contemporary Vietnam

- Kim Ninh, "Vietnam: Struggle and Cooperation," from Muthiah Alagappa (ed.), *Asian Security Practice* (Stanford University Press, 1998), pp. 445-476.

- “Asking for a Child: The Refashioning of Reproductive Space in Post-War Northern Vietnam,” Harriet M. Phinney

Thursday, July 22: Course Review

Friday, July 23: Final Exam (at hotel)