

## **Curriculum Description for Singapore-Cambridge GCE 'A' Level**

Paper 2 History of Southeast Asia, c.1900-1997

The focus of this paper is on the themes of nationalism, independence, nation building and regionalism in Southeast Asia between 1900 and 1997. The themes will be studied in the context of the following:

- a. How Independence was achieved
- b. Challenges Faced by the Independent Southeast Asian States
- c. Regional Conflicts and Cooperation

The paper emphasizes cross-comparative studies of countries in the Southeast Asian region during the different stages of their experience between 1900 and 1997. It is recommended that the case studies be carefully selected to provide a meaningful study of the similarities and differences in the historical developments of this region.

The following countries could be selected as possible case studies. Candidates are expected to select at least three countries as examples to support their answers.

Countries under study –Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, Laos, Thailand, Myanmar, The Philippines, Cambodia

### **I HOW INDEPENDENCE WAS ACHIEVED**

1. Origins, nature and development of pre-World War II nationalism: achievements and limitations

-Origins of pre-World War II nationalism: political, economic and social impact of colonial rule

-Nature of pre-World War II nationalism

o Aims and activities of the early nationalist movements

o Traditional and modern movements; moderate and radical movements

o Role of religion, culture and ideology in the development of nationalist movements

o Role of early nationalist leaders, their motivations and achievements

- Achievements and limitations of the pre-World War II nationalist movements

2. Colonial governments' response to nationalist movements

- Policies adopted by the colonial governments to deal with the challenges posed by the nationalist movements

- Successes and limitations of the colonial governments' measures

3. Impact of World War II on the development of nationalism

- Impact of the Japanese Occupation on nationalist movements

o Collaboration and resistance by local nationalists: successes and limitations

o Emergence of new elites

o Beginning of mass politics

- Historical debate on whether the Japanese Occupation was a turning point of

- Southeast Asian nationalism
4. End of the colonial rule: role of the nationalists; impact of colonial policies and international circumstances
    - Confrontation and negotiation between the Southeast Asian nationalists and the colonial powers after World War II
    - Transfer of power or struggle for independence
    - International circumstances e.g. American support of decolonisation; Cold War between USA and USSR; threat of Communism

## II CHALLENGES TO INDEPENDENT SOUTHEAST ASIAN STATES

1. Search for political structures and governments: achievements and limitations
  - Different forms of governments: parliamentary/liberal democracy; 'maximum' government
  - Role of the military: dominant/subordinate roles
  - Role of the Communist parties
2. Economic development and consequences
  - Economic challenges encountered and strategies adopted to promote economic development
  - Role of government in economic development
  - Role of the different communities
  - Asian Financial Crisis: causes
3. Different approaches to national unity: successes and limitations
  - Different approaches to create national unity e.g. education, language, religion, dominant culture, multiculturalism, national symbols and ideologies
  - Policies towards minorities

## III REGIONAL CONFLICTS AND COOPERATION

1. Inter-state tensions in Southeast Asia: causes and consequences
  - Causes of inter-state tensions: historical animosities, racial and religious divisions, ideological differences, territorial disputes
  - Consequences of these tensions: effects on regional cooperation and security
2. \* ASEAN, 1967-1997
  - Reasons for the formation of ASEAN
  - Founding members of ASEAN and their contributions
  - Growth and development of ASEAN
  - Areas of cooperation: political, economic, social, cultural and environment
  - ASEAN after the Vietnam War (1975): regional peace and security of Southeast Asia
  - ASEAN and regional identity
  - Strengths and limitations of ASEAN

\* The source-based study is on the topic, ASEAN, 1967-1997. Candidates will be expected to assess the effectiveness of ASEAN in meeting its responsibilities within the regional framework. They should be aware of the different views on and accounts of the effectiveness of ASEAN and be able to interpret sources that provide these views and explanations.

Please refer to the SEAB website for more information regarding this course.

<http://www.seab.gov.sg>