

Keio University Syllabus and Timetable

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA : PAST AND PRESENT

Lecturer(s)	CHANDRA, ELIZABETH
Credit(s)	2
Academic Year/Semester	2026 Spring
Day/Period	Fri.5
Campus	Mita
Classroom	452
Class Format	Face-to-face classes (conducted mainly in-person)
Registration Number	79083
Faculty/Graduate School	INTERNATIONAL CENTER
Year Level	2, 3, 4
Grade Type	S, A, B, C, D
Course Description	A course to aim to examine the intersections of involuntary labor, transnational migration and sexual exchange, which today fall under the category of "human trafficking."
K-Number	CIN-CO-00223-212-85

[▼ Detail](#)

Course Contents/Objectives/Teaching Method/Intended Learning Outcome

This course examines the intersection of involuntary labor, transnational migration, and sexual exchange, broadly categorized under "human trafficking." While this issue has gained urgency with the adoption of the United Nations' Palermo Protocol (2000), historical inquiries reveal that commercial sexual labor has existed in various forms and under different guises throughout history. This course situates contemporary human trafficking within a continuum with historically similar practices, some of which were considered "indigenous" to Asia. We will look at traditional forms of servitude and sexual exchange in east and southeast Asia, as well as the contemporary transnational migration of women for the sex industry. We will engage with historiographic and ethnographic accounts on slavery, dependency, and other forms of servitude in Asia as a necessary background to our examination of modern practices of using women for sexual services.

The course will also delve into the social and economic conditions that have historically facilitated the growth of the sex industry, including colonial establishments, and military mobilization, and the so-called "white slave" trade that spurred abolitionist movements by feminist and religious groups in the early 20th century. For contemporary cases, we will examine practices that have been associated with human trafficking, such as prostitution and international brokered marriages. We will investigate the possibility of agency among exploited women, potentially challenging the predominant victimhood narrative. We will conclude with a discussion on the social norms surrounding payment for intimate relations.

While our inquiries will sample cases from various parts of Asia, we will place particular emphasis on southeast Asia. This is because southeast Asia holds a double role as a major source of transnational migration for sexual labor, as well as a site where the sex trade takes place extensively. Given this regional emphasis, this course is particularly recommended for students with a background in Area Studies.

This course is limited to 16 students. To secure your spot, please follow the enrollment instructions provided below.

Course Taught by Faculty Member with Professional Experience

Not applicable

Active Learning Methods [Description](#)

Discussions, Debates
Flipped classroom
Problem-based learning

Preparatory Study

Students should expect weekly reading and writing assignments.

Course Plan

Lesson 1

Introduction

Lesson 2

Indigenous Forms of Servitude

Lesson 3

Traditional Norms of Sexuality

Lesson 4

Slaves, Servants, Concubines

Lesson 5

The Colonial Sex Trade

Lesson 6

White Slavery

Lesson 7

Trafficking and Marriage Migration

Lesson 8

Wartime Sex Slavery

Lesson 9

Modern-day Trafficking

Lesson 10

The Trafficking Protocol

Lesson 11

Benevolent Paternalism

Lesson 12

On Victimhood

Lesson 13

"Mail-order Brides"

Lesson 14

The Purchase of Intimacy

Other

Wrap-up

Method of Evaluation

Weekly papers (40%)

Attendance (40%)

Class discussion (20%)

Generative AI Policy for Classes

The use of AI tools is permitted for refining language and correcting grammar in written commentaries. However, students are expected to be able to discuss their written work at length and in depth during class. An inability to speak to the nuances of your written work may be interpreted as a lack of original authorship.

Reference Books

Anthony Reid ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St. Martin's Press, 1983)

James Francis Warren, *Ah Ku and Karayuki-san: Prostitution in Singapore, 1870-1940* (Singapore University Press, 2003)

Thanh-dam Truong, *Sex, Money and Morality: Prostitution and Tourism in Southeast Asia* (Zed Books, 1990)

Maria Jaschok, *Concubines and Bondservants: A Social History* (Zed Books, 1988)

Maria Rosa Henson, *Comfort Woman: A Filipina's Story of Prostitution and Slavery Under the Japanese Military* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1999)

Ko-lin Chin & James O. Finckenaer, *Selling Sex Overseas: Chinese Women and the Realities of Prostitution and Global Sex Trafficking* (New York University Press, 2012)

Rhacel Salazar Parreñas, *Illicit Flirtations: Labor, Migration, and Sex Trafficking in Tokyo* (Stanford University Press, 2011)

Viviana A. Zelizer, *The Purchase of Intimacy* (Princeton University Press, 2005)

Lecturer's Comments to Students

This course will be conducted in a seminar format, so enrollment is limited to 16 students. In addition to registering through the university system during the first registration period, prospective students must email Professor Chandra (elizabeth.chandra@gmail.com) with a brief self-introduction, their registered name, and student ID number. Instructor selections will be communicated as part of the first registration confirmation.

Admitted students must attend the first class session. Important details regarding course requirements will be provided during this session and will not be repeated.

Throughout the semester, students will be required to write a weekly one-page commentary on an assigned

reading (approximately 30–50 pages per week). The readings will be made available via K-LMS. There will be no final exam.

Question/Comments

Attendance at the first class session is mandatory. Those unable to attend must contact the instructor (elizabeth.chandra@gmail.com) in advance.