

Dr Su Lin Lewis

Lecturer in Asian History

[Department of History \(/schools/historycultures/departments/history/index.aspx\)](/schools/historycultures/departments/history/index.aspx)

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About

I am a global historian interested in cities, migration, and civil society. My research interests are primarily in modern Southeast Asia, with a focus on transnational connections and cross-cultural exchange.

Qualifications

- PhD, History, University of Cambridge, 2010
- M.A., History, School of Oriental and African Studies, 2004
- B.A. (Comb. Hons), History and Contemporary Studies, the University of King's College and Dalhousie University, Canada, 2001

Biography

Before joining the School of History and Cultures in August 2013, I was a Mellon post-doctoral fellow in the Department of South and Southeast Asian studies at the University of California, Berkeley between 2011 and 2013. I was a Past and Present post-doctoral fellow at the Institute of Historical Research in London in 2010/11, and a sessional lecturer at Birkbeck College in 2009, where I taught a graduate class on global cities. I have also worked on social development projects for the World Bank and International Organization for Migration in Indonesia, where I developed an interest in the history of local civil society organizations and grassroots social movements in Southeast Asia.

Teaching

This year I will be teaching a second-year option module on 'The Making of Modern Southeast Asia c. 1860-1960', as well as a group research course is 'Student activism in 20th c. Burma.' I will also be co-teaching 'History, Theory, and Practice' and the MA in Contemporary History's core module on 'Globalization since 1945'. I will additionally be contributing lectures to the new MA in Global History.

Postgraduate supervision

I would be happy to discuss offering postgraduate supervision in any topic relating to inter-ethnic relations, social activism, and social, intellectual, and urban history in twentieth-century South and Southeast Asia.

Research

I am currently completing a manuscript based on my PhD thesis that explores intersecting themes of urban space, cross-cultural sociability, education, the press, and popular culture in the 1920s and 1930s. The book focuses largely on the cities of Rangoon, Penang, and Bangkok. I am currently pursuing research on cultural internationalism and the transnational movements of activists, literati and artists in the 1950s, focusing on Burma, Malaysia, and Indonesia, as well as African-Americans in Cold War Asia.

Other activities

Most recently I have been a collaborator and speaker on events hosted by the 'Sites of Asian interaction' project at the Cambridge Centre for Economics and History. I am also currently involved in heritage conservation projects in Southeast Asia, working with the Yangon Heritage Trust and Think City Penang to share ideas on community-driven development in heritage zones and promote public awareness of the vibrant, multi-ethnic histories of Asian port-cities.

Publications

- Editorial: 'A world of ideas: new pathways in global intellectual history, c. 1880-1930' co-authored with Stefanie Gaenger, *Modern Intellectual History*, forthcoming Vol. 10:2, August 2013
- 'Between Orientalism and Nationalism: the learned society and the making of "Southeast Asia"', *Modern Intellectual History*, forthcoming Vol. 10:2, August 2013
- Editorial 'The roots of global civil society and the interwar moment', co-authored with Andrew Arsan and Anne-Isabelle Richard, *Journal of Global History* Vol. 7:2, July 2012
- 'Breaking the Colour Bar: The Rotary Movement and the 'International Mind' in 1930s Southeast Asia', *Journal of Global History* Vol. 7:2, July 2012
- 'Cosmopolitanism and the Modern Girl: A Cross-cultural Discourse in Interwar Penang' in *Modern Asian Studies* 43:6, November 2009
- 'Print and Colonial Port-Cultures of the Indian Ocean: Rangoon and Penang' in *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, December 2009 (republished in *Moussons* no 7 Social Science Research on Southeast Asia for special issue on 'the Moving Frontiers of Burma', summer 2011)
- 'Echoes of Cosmopolitanism: Colonial Penang's 'Indigenous' English Press' in *Media and the British Empire* Ed. Chandrika Kaul (London: Palgrave Macmillan,

