

20 Years after Reformasi: Democratisation and the Politics of In/Exclusion in Indonesia and Malaysia

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Brief Description:

Amidst financial crises, reformasi (reformation) movements kicked off in Indonesia and Malaysia in 1998, which had contributed to the fall of New Order Regime in Indonesia and to the weakening of the ruling regime in Malaysia (which was finally voted out by most Malaysians in 2018). The opening up of democratic space, on one hand, leads to the growth of various inclusive and progressive social movements; yet on the other hand, it also allows exclusive and conservative social forces to become more visible and influential. It is what Karl Popper terms as 'the paradox of tolerance' which might be detrimental to the overall wellbeing of the democracy itself. In Muslim-majority Malaysia and Indonesia, amidst the growing visible discourses of liberal ideas, pluralistic forces and LGBT rights, we witness an increase in the politics of othering (against certain ethnic, religious, sexual minorities) and the instrumentalisation of ethno-religious issues to mobilise people. In other words, how different groups make use of the democratising space, both online and offline, to claim or to defend their 'rights'? What are the religious, political and socio-economic reasons behind such politics of inclusion and exclusion in democratising Malaysia and Indonesia? This panel welcomes papers from different disciplinary background to examines the prospects and challenges of democratisation, and examine the roles and impacts of diverse social and political actors in Indonesia and Malaysia since 1998. It focuses on Malaysia and Indonesia, but we also welcome related contributions on other countries in Southeast Asia.

Single- session (1x90 min, 3-4 papers)

Discussant:

Saskia Schäfer (Humboldt University of Berlin)