

**Understanding Humor in Southeast Asia**  
**Classical and Contemporary Literature in Translation**

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This panel brings together scholars of translation, humor, comparative literature, and cultural studies.

The field of literary humor in Southeast Asia is a field still relatively unexplored, even though humour is rather common both in traditional and contemporary Southeast Asian literatures and cultures. The scarcity of studies dedicated to Southeast Asian literatures and the shortage of translations into Western languages makes difficult to draw an overall picture of the humorous literary production in the area. This may contribute to the Eurocentric stereotype according to which humor in the Eastern world is often obscure, incomprehensible, paradoxical and even perhaps non-existent. This in addition to the fact that humour is not always found in the same contexts and at the same conditions it occurs in European cultures. In fact in Southeast Asia, as in the rest of the world, humor is a powerful force and is closely connected to both the language and the socio-cultural context in which it is produced. The papers on this panel address this issue by exploring the translation from different Southeast Asian languages of literary and humorous styles, including comedy, irony, satire, parody and the grotesque.