

**2022 EuroSEAS Conference
Panel Proposal (Double session)**

Title

Race and Coloniality in Southeast Asia

Co-Convenors

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Format

We are keen to foster an environment that facilitates dialogue and discussion in the spirit of learning with and from each other during this double-panel session. Individual paper presentations will be kept to 15 minutes with sufficient time allocated for a Q&A of around 10 minutes each. We will also invite a discussant to respond to the presentations in the final section of the panel.

Description

'Race' is one of the sediments of the colonial project that continues to fertilize the national imaginations of countries across Southeast Asia. Colonial officials like J. S. Furnivall regularly asserted that the management of 'race' was a key part of colonial governance in the absence of an "organic social will" between 'races' in colonies.¹ 'Race' thus functioned as a technology of government that divided populations of people up into essentialized containers that ostensibly could not be allowed to mix or interact freely. These logics continue to haunt Southeast Asian politics and operate as a key generator of difference that inflects how postcolonial states view their citizens, as well as how postcolonial citizens view themselves, one another, and their respective nations. It has become an increasingly urgent topic particularly in the present conjuncture as the forces of nationalism assert themselves ever more forcefully, whilst enlisting ideas of racial superiority, purity, and hegemony in their service. Bringing together papers that explore the myriad ways 'race' matters, and is made to matter, in Southeast Asia, this panel aims to spark a discussion and critical reflections on 'race' and colonial logics in Southeast Asia and what is at stake in states' reliance on them as mediators of legitimacy and justifiability. Possible questions to be addressed are (but not limited to): How is 'race' bound up with (post)coloniality in Southeast Asia? How does the governance of 'race' intersect with the governance of gender & sexuality, religion, class, borders, citizenship & migration regimes and more? How might we begin to undo the racial hierarchies and classifications that are currently embedded in Southeast Asian politics? What might a reparative racial politics look like?

¹ John S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1948), p. 311.