

EuroSEAS Panel Proposal
Bureaucratizing the *Sharia*: Socio-Legal Dimensions of Islamic
Governance in Southeast Asia

Panel Conveners

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While much research on Islamic politics in contemporary Southeast Asia has primarily focused on popular Islamic revivalism or the role of Muslim political parties and mass organizations, relatively few studies have systematically paid attention to the highly influential role of the state and its religious bureaucracies.

In Southeast Asian countries where Muslim interests play a significant political role, including Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines, the state has taken a strong interest in “guiding”, sometimes even controlling Islamic discourse. The state is of course not a homogeneous entity, so different methods of bureaucratizing Islam are being employed with diverse motivations, and embedded in diverse national histories and societal constellations.

Such policies of Islamic bureaucratization are not just a reaction to Islamist opposition or popular trends, but an active project of formalizing a state-defined brand of Islam and *shari'a* legislation. These processes of bureaucratizing Islam in the context of modern nation states have far reaching social and legal implications. A range of involved or affected social actors position themselves in diverse ways to hegemonic Islamization policies and the bureaucracy's attempted exercise of the state's classificatory power.

Our panel brings together an interdisciplinary group of scholars who are investigating the diversity of approaches to bureaucratizing Islamic law in Southeast Asia and the societies' equally diverse responses to those attempts.

Session 1

Dr. Dominik Mueller, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, *“Translating Islam into the Language of State Bureaucracy: Hermeneutic and Functional Dimensions of Islamic Governance in Southeast Asia”*

Professor Timothy Daniels, Hofstra University, *“Malaysian Islamic Bureaucracy, Diverse Social Forces, and Sharia Dynamics”*

Associate Professor Kikue Hamayotsu, Northern Illinois University, *“Institutionalized Religion and the Making of Malay Ethnic Identity in Contemporary Malaysia”*

Discussant: Dr. Kerstin Steiner, Monash University

Session 2

Professor Iik Arifin Mansurnoor, UIN of Jakarta, Asep Saepudin Jahar, Dean UIN Jakarta and Professor Masykuri Abdillah, UIN Jakarta, *“Competing for Convenience or Order? State and Islamic Law in Southeast Asia with Special References to Brunei and Indonesia”*

Dr. Kerstin Steiner, Monash University, *“Islam, Law and State in the Philippines”*

Afif Pasuni, University of Warwick, *“The Fatwa Institution in Singapore: Negotiating Policy and Law”*

Discussant: Dr. Dominik Mueller, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology