

New Turning Points in Southeast Asian History

Double panel proposal EuroSEAS 2017

Chairs: Bart Luttikhuis and Arnout van der Meer

This double panel proposes to reconsider the periodization of Southeast Asian histories. Our revisionist approach challenges scholars of Southeast Asia to discover crucial turning points in local or regional histories that have been overlooked due to Western-centric chronologies (even if we do not deny the importance of such global events as the World Wars or the Great Depression for the region). We suggest that by identifying crucial pivots or periods of transition that are more indigenous to the area, we may be encouraged to reexamine also the causes of global developments. For example, the increased autonomy of many colonies in the 1910s and 1920s has frequently been interpreted in light of the influence of World War I and the resulting ‘Wilsonian moment’, but should we not pay more attention to changes in mentality that were already apparent in the years before? Considering these narratives from Southeast Asian perspectives not only enriches national and regional histories, but also provides a more profound understanding of the relationship between the local and the global.

For the purposes of this panel, we interpret turning points widely: from a particular event, to a year, to an even longer period of transformation. We have brought together a diverse group of scholars working on various regions and time periods, who together will explore how best to start re-writing the chronologies of Southeast Asian history from within.

Panel I

Discussant: Remco Raben (Professor, University of Amsterdam / Utrecht University)

- Jennifer Gaynor (Assistant Professor, The State University of New York at Buffalo): ‘On the meanings of insular Southeast Asia: Turning points in coastal and archipelagic history’.
- Bradley Camp Davis (Assistant Professor, Eastern Connecticut State University): ‘The Production of Peoples: Imperial Ethnography and the Changing Conception of Uplands Space in Nineteenth-Century Vietnam’.
- Cesar Suva (Teaching Fellow, College of Asia and the Pacific, ANU): ‘In the Shadow of 1881: Succession Crisis in the Sultanate of Sulu, Philippines, and Colonial Transition’.

Panel II

Discussant: tbd

- Bart Luttikhuis (Researcher, KITLV) and Arnout van der Meer (Assistant Professor, Colby College): ‘Provincializing the Decline of the West: 1913 in Indonesian History’.
- Ruth de Llobet (Assistant Professor University Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona): ‘Multiple Crossings: Towards a problematizing and new approach to the Spanish period in the History of the Philippines’.
- Sara Legrandjacques (PhD candidate, the Centre d’Histoire de l’Asie Contemporaine (CHAC) - University Paris 1): ‘Reshaping Vietnam: Vietnamese nationalism during the 1st decade of the 20th Century’