

Panel Submission for Euroseas 2017 (Oxford, 16-18 August 2017)

1. Title: Writing Human Rights in Colonial Southeast Asia
2. Convener: Paul Bijl (University of Amsterdam / KITLV)

3. Description of panel:

This panel addresses writings and histories on human and citizen rights in Southeast Asia, particularly in relation to colonialism. Human rights history has often disregarded the ways in which Asians and other people of color living with European and other colonialisms have developed, appropriated and interacted with rights talk, while in public debate human rights are often seen as Western inventions which can serve as the basis for interventions, or precisely as alien to "Asian values". In colonial Indonesia, for instance, we see several writers of letters, novels and pamphlets arguing for citizen rights on the basis of ideas of human equality and universal rights, for instance on the basis of Islam. Was anticolonialism a human rights movement or a citizen rights movement, or both or neither? Papers which show other constellations, for instance writings by people of color arguing against individual rights or rights talk not part of anticolonial movements, are also welcome.

4. Single or double session (depends). We have now three panelist:

- Andra le Roux-Kemp (School of Law, City University of Hong Kong), who will talk about human rights in Hong Kong around 1997 and beyond;
- Amy Rothschild (Anthropology, University of California, San Diego), who will address human rights discourses in Timor-Leste in the 1980s and 1990s;
- Paul Bijl (Literature, University of Amsterdam and KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian Studies), who will address Indonesian colonial writings (1900-1945) on human and citizen rights.

If you are interested to be a speaker or discussant, please contact Paul at p.a.l.bijl@uva.nl.