

## **Civil Society and Authoritarianism in Cold War Southeast Asia**

The recent history of Southeast Asia has long been understood in the popular imagination through the lens of the Cold War; indeed, even the term “Southeast Asia” itself became prominent as a strategic geographical designation by Allied forces during the Second World War and its aftermath. But although somewhat subsumed in English-language scholarship by events such as the U.S.-Soviet rivalry or the Vietnam War, the region’s postwar history has been characterised by complex relations between authoritarian governments and a range of civil society groups. Far from superpower proxies, both governments and opposition repurposed and exploited Cold War rhetoric and foreign intervention to pursue domestic political ends.

Growing access to local archives, however, has contributed to new research which challenges previous superpower-driven narratives, and highlights local agency. This panel builds on these promising lines of inquiry by exploring the complex and evolving relationship between state and civil society in Cold War Southeast Asia. We welcome papers which focus on the impact of international or transnational networks; the mobility of people and information; the rise of grassroots political and religious movements; the role of authoritarian government; political journalism; or the impact of the environment on political and social change, among other themes.

### **Convenor:**

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