

28 July-1 August 2024

Surabaya, Indonesia

8. Negotiating Margins: Representations, Resistances, Agencies

The goal of ICAS 13 is to facilitate global transdisciplinary conversations and to link such conversations with local realities. The broader scope and description of this theme can be found under the 'thematic cluster' header which provides ideas and examples of proposal topics that can be submitted under this theme. If you think your proposal fits in multiple themes, please choose the one that you believe suits best.

ICAS 13 would like to introduce the local realities in these transdisciplinary conversations, the explanation of the theme starts off with a note on 'local context' intended to highlight connections between heterogeneous Asian Studies research and the particular perspective from Surabaya, Indonesia.

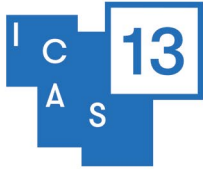
This theme welcomes proposals with a broader disciplinary and geographical perspective as well as proposals that connect these perspectives to the Indonesian context.

The local context

Surabaya is an old cosmopolitan city-port that embodies Indonesia's national motto of Unity in Diversity (Bhinneka Tunggal Ika) in every regard. The city offers a wide variety of religious, linguistic, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity. The notion of SARA, an Indonesian abbreviation for ethnicity, religion, race, and other social divisions, resonates among the people and can be invoked to prevent clashes between different communities, simultaneously reminding them of the multiple diversities that constitute the Indonesian society. This offers a way for those belonging to the mainstream to exist alongside those in the margins – in both easy and sometimes uneasy co-presences. These margins, like the rest of Indonesia, are diverse. The problematic access to education and work in several marginal groups, especially women and children, is often palpable. They are also vulnerable in various relationships, including within the marriage and family. In a wider political context increasingly coloured by a narrowing of possibilities for gender and sexual expression, Indonesia's oldest gay rights organisation, GAYa Nusantara, continues to survive in Surabaya, reminding us all that Indonesia's unity thrives by virtue of its diversity, not despite it.

This thematic cluster

This reality is not limited to Indonesia. As Anna Tsing reminds us, margins force us to think about 'creative living at the edge', helping us to grapple with differences and tensions that play out on a regional, national, as well as global level. Different Asian countries and societies have seen their share of discrimination, marginalization and engineered oblivion, from the Muslims and Christians in BJP-led India, to Korean descendants in Japan, from civil rights activists in Hong Kong, Thailand and Cambodia, to migrant workers in Singapore or Dubai, from women in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan to protesters against the Zero-Covid Policy in China. In addition, there are continuous cases of repression and violations based on race, caste, gender, age and ethnicity, such as child marriage, female feticide, forced circumcision, and so forth. This thematic cluster constitutes a space for participants wishing to share their experiences and knowledge on what marginality, modes of inclusion, and exclusion mean in twenty-first-century Asia and what new forms of relegation these may take in the continent's fast-transforming societies.



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These topics can be explored through various formats of engagement, including papers, panels, roundtables, posters, audio-visuals and other media, to ensure a broad forum of academic and civic exchanges. We also welcome you to share other formats and ideas; to propose activities, workshops and exhibitions to enrich the exchange of knowledge and experiences.