Bukan tempat relaks sahaja: Coffee-shops in Colonial Singapore as Domains of Contentious Publics
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Abstract

The role of places such as coffee-shops in the life and transformation of publics and public spheres in colonial Southeast Asia has received little attention from scholars of the humanities and social sciences. Using Singapore to address this gap in scholarship, this article offers a conceptual lens with which to view coffee shops in Southeast Asia. I argue that coffee shops in Singapore and in the region were ‘domains of contentious publics’, shaped and affected by the shifting constellations of their time. These were places in which two distinctive publics were to emerge (‘lobby’ and ‘grapevine’), each of which helped to expand the limits of the colonial public sphere in an age of decolonization.

Speaker’s Profile