

Postcolonial Criticism and Southeast Asian Studies: Pitfalls, Retreat, and Unfulfilled Promises

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Abstrak

This paper reflects on the relationship between postcolonial criticism (PC) and Southeast Asian Studies. The emphasis is on the apparent premature retreat from PC as well as its unfulfilled promises and persistent pitfalls. I argue that it is premature to abandon PC because it remains relevant, even essential, in the context of the much ballyhooed age of “knowledge economy” or “information society.” There is a need to take another look at its promises and to work towards fulfilling them, but at the same time be conscious of its persistent problems.