



School of Government & Public Policy

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*Battles for Pluralism: Indonesia, Malaysia, and the
Great Democratic Unknown*

Abstract: In a pattern often repeated across world history, the culturally diverse societies of Indonesia and Malaysia have moved in recent decades from hegemonic authoritarian rule to pluralistic democratic competition. Whenever and wherever such transitions occur, either with the end of empires or the demise of dictatorships, it becomes highly uncertain whether democracy and diversity can flourish in tandem. *Battles for Pluralism* traces these parallel ongoing transitions in two of the world's only Muslim-majority democracies. It offers a comparative and historical perspective on the contemporary struggles of pluralists in Indonesia and Malaysia to build winning coalitions that can protect both democracy and diversity. The book's simple guiding conviction is that for democracy and diversity to work, political forces supporting democracy and diversity need to win.

*Dan Slater (Ph.D. Emory, 2005) specializes in the politics and history of dictatorship and democracy, with a regional focus on Southeast Asia. He came to Michigan in 2017 after twelve years on the faculty at the University of Chicago, where he served as Director of the Center for International Social Science Research (CISSR), Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science, and associate member in the Department of Sociology. His book examining how divergent historical patterns of contentious politics have shaped variation in state power and authoritarian durability in seven Southeast Asian countries, entitled *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia*, was published in the Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics series in 2010. His latest book is entitled *From Development to Democracy: The Transformations of Modern Asia* (Princeton University Press, 2022), which explores why rapid economic development has led to democratization in some Asian countries but not others. His published articles can be found in disciplinary journals such as the *American Journal of Political Science*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Annual Review of Political Science*, *British Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Democratization*, *Government & Opposition*, *International Organization*, *Perspectives on Politics*, *Social Science History*, *Studies in Comparative International Development*, and *World Politics*, as well as Asia-oriented journals such as *Critical Asian Studies*, *Indonesia*, *Journal of East Asian Studies*, *South East Asia Research*, *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*, and *TRANS*. Before commencing his doctoral studies at Emory in 1999 he received a B.A. in International Relations and History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, an M.A. in International Studies from the Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington, and spent ten months as a Fulbright scholar in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 1998. Beyond Southeast Asia, he has done international consulting work on challenges related to democratization and demilitarization in cases such as Ethiopia, Fiji, and Pakistan. He has also recently worked as a consultant and nonresident fellow with international policy organizations such as the American Enterprise Institute, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Freedom House, OECD, and World Bank.*

Friday, April 26 @ Noon
Social Sciences Building | Room 311