

## **ASIEN 70 (Januar 1999)**

Abstract

### **Politische Kultur und die Wirtschaftskrise Südostasiens**

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Since the summer of 1997 Southeast Asia is facing a deep economic crisis, which has ended decades of sustained economic growth. The causes of the crisis can be linked to concrete developments in the financial and trading sector. At the same time the IMF-programs aim at structural reform of the economies involved. Many Southeast Asians, however, feel that the West tries to undermine their own economic culture. In the political field, the crisis has sparked off changes of government that put reform-minded politicians in charge of a number of Southeast Asian countries. Yet, in insular Southeast Asia things have turned out to be more complex, Indonesia going through a halfway system change and Malaysia torn by a political power struggle. At a more fundamental level, in the whole region a new political culture is emerging in which civil society plays a bigger role than formerly. The social pressures unleashed by the crisis may contribute to the emergence of more open political and economic systems in the region, although a backlash cannot be ruled out.