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Elements in Politics and Society in Southeast Asia

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ORGANIZED LABOR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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Organized Labor in Southeast Asia

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Abstract: This Element analyzes the economic and political forces behind the political marginalization of working-class organizations in Southeast Asia. It traces the roots of labor exclusion to the geopolitics of the early postwar period when many governments rolled back the left and established labor control regimes that prevented the re-emergence of working-class movements. This Element also examines the economic and political dynamics that perpetuated labor's containment in some countries and that produced a resurgence of labor mobilization in others in the twenty-first century. It also explains why democratization has had mixed effects on organized labor in Southeast Asia and analyzes three distinctive "anatomies of contention" of the region's feistiest labor movements in Cambodia, Indonesia, and Vietnam.

Keywords: labor, Southeast Asia, social movements, contentious politics, comparative politics

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