

International Burma Studies Conference
Burma in the Era of Globalization
Marseille, France
July 6-9, 2010

1. Pre-Historic Burma – Between China and India – In Its South-Eastern Asian Environment.

Convenor: Jean-Pierre Pautreau & Anne-Sophie Coupey, CNRS, Université de Rennes 1

Contact : pautreau@club-internet.fr & coupeyas@yahoo.fr

Thematic 1: “Paleolithic, Hoabinhian, Cave Paintings, Rock Shelters, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age Burials, Ceramics, Ornaments, Dates.”

Participants:

- Jean-Pierre Pautreau (CNRS, Université de Rennes)
- Anne-Sophie Coupey (Université de Rennes)
- Ni Ni Khet (Université de Rennes)
- Ch. Maitay
- Emma Rambault

Thematic 2: Written in the Earth: Landscape Archaeology of Burma

Participants:

- Janice Stargardt
- Dietrich Mahlo (Berlin)

Abstract: As for neighbouring countries during the Pre-historic period and the Metal Ages, Myanmar was concerned by different movements of population, ideas and material goods which bear no relation to the frontiers of today. The population of these areas – today Burmese – through centuries, before the arrival of Hinduism and Buddhism, developed their own ways of life drawn from ancestral traditions and contacts of faraway origins.

Recent progress in archaeological research has led to these multiple aspects being taken into account. A study of sensitive zones such as the Irrawaddy-Samon-Sittaung axis or the Isthmus of Kra highlights the role played by watercourses and maritime activities. It is primordial that inventories and research be carried out in a wider sphere than that restricted by the boundaries of today’s Burma. This is particularly true concerning the diffusion of Western products, Chinese bronzes or Indian pottery and jewellery as for all raw material resources and manufactured products. The study of original funereal rites, the preliminary metallographic analysis of iron and bronze objects, of basic stone and semi-precious stone or glass jewellery must also be undertaken within the wider inter-regional field. This is also the case for the comparative examination of the rare absolute datings in Pre and Proto Historic Burma.

These approaches may lead to the discovery of the ante-historical roots of the Pyu phenomenon and to define the role of merchants, craftsmen and missionaries in the make-up of regional protohistorical societies.

2. Dealing with Burmese Historical Sources: New Perspectives on Old Challenges

Convenor: Leider, Jacques (Ecole française d'extrême Orient – EFEO Yangon/Chiang Mai)

Contact : jacques.leider@efeo.net

Participants:

- Aurore Candier (Ph.D. student, Paris-Sorbonne)
- Tilman Frasch (Metropolitan University of Manchester)
- Alicia Turner (University of Chicago)
- Jacques Leider (EFEO, Chiang Mai/ Yangon)
- Alexey Kirichenko (Institute of Asian and African Studies, Moscow State University)
- Patrick McCormick (Ph.D. student, University of Washington)
- Andrew Huxley (SOAS, University of London)
- Lalita Hingkanonta

Abstract: While getting rid of its ethnocentric focus, historical research on Burma/Myanmar has been marked over the last few decades by the discussion of interpretations and the testing of paradigms rather than by an increase of investigations into textual sources. The contributors to this panel share on the one hand the feeling that standard concepts need indeed further revision but they consider on the other hand that a mass of little explored material is still waiting to be studied. The study of Burmese/Myanmar history is moreover hampered by the lack of critically edited sources. The papers contributed will offer detailed studies based on hitherto unexplored material or new critical approaches that should increase our knowledge and understanding of Burmese/Myanmar history and raise further awareness of source-related issues.

3. Burma, Northern Thailand, Laos, and Southwestern China: Connections in Material and Visual Cultures

Convenors : Catherine Raymond (Director, Center for Burma Studies, Northern Illinois University) & Alexandra Green (Research Assistant Professor, Department of Fine Arts, University of Hong Kong)

Contacts: craymond@niu.edu & greenar28@gmail.com

Participants :

- Alexandra Green (Research Assistant Professor, Department of Fine Arts, University of Hong Kong)
- Catherine Raymond (Director, Center for Burma Studies, Northern Illinois University)
- Gillian Green (Honorary Associate, Department of Art History and Film Studies, University of Sydney, Australia)

- Klemens Karlsson

Abstract: Scholarship on the interactions among peoples in Northern Thailand, Laos, the Shan State(s), Burma, and Southwestern China is limited. The region still lacks general art historical studies, and an analysis of the impact of intercultural interactions on art and architecture specifically. In the region, however, cross-cultural interactions are abundantly evident, particularly within the religious sphere. Aspects of this evidence have been explored in textile studies, yet contact between the cultures living within this region has resulted in the sharing of imagery in mural paintings, sculpture, architecture, and many other forms of material culture. Similar motifs used around the region can be found in variable contexts. For example, wooden sculptures of inter-twined nagas found in wats in Northern Thailand are extant in seventeenth and eighteenth century Burmese murals, and the elephant-headed bird exists in the art of both regions - as a coffin support in one and as a mount for royal individuals in a Buddhist narrative in the other. Visual correspondence does not necessarily translate into identical comprehension of the imagery in the various areas, and the cultural significance of the objects, as well as their possible modes of transmission must also be examined. In this panel we are thus proposing to explore the art historical evidence for and significance of the connections within the Burma, Northern Thailand, Laos, and Southwestern China region. Papers analyzing the similarities and differences in the visual and material culture of the region will be considered for inclusion in the panel.

4. At the Crossroad of Cultures: The Arts of Burma

Convenor: Bautze-Picron, Claudine (CNRS, Modes Iranien et Indien, Paris)

Contact: cbpicron@gmx.de

Participants:

- Bautze-Picron, Claudine (CNRS, Modes Iranien et Indien, Paris)
- Christophe Munier-Gaillard (Ph.D. Candidate, Paris Sorbonne Paris-IV, CREOPS)
- Anne-May Chew.
- Gillian Green (Honorary Associate, Department of Art History and Film Studies, University of Sydney, Australia)
- Charlotte Galloway (Australian National University)
- Christian Bauer (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Abstract: All through its history, Burma has been the receptacle of influences of various origins. This panel should consider the “internationality” of the art of the country: what were the nature and the support of these influences which originated from various countries, India mainly, but also China or Sri Lanka? Was it religious? Was it related to trade? How did the artist react when facing the “other”, the “foreigner”? How did he incorporate him in his production? Within Burma, can we trace strict lines between the arts of the Pyus, the Mons, the Burmese, the Shans? And can this help us to define the art which emerged after the “Pagan Period” as being “Burmese” or “Shan” for instance?

5. Encountering the Weikza: The Unity and Diversity of a Burmese Phenomenon

Convenors: Bénédicte Brac de la Perrière (CNRS-Centre Asie du Sud-Est) & Guillaume Rozenberg (CNRS-Université Toulouse Le Mirail)

Contacts : brac@vjf.cnrs.fr & rozenberg_guilla@hotmail.com

Participants :

Session 1: Explorations in the Weikza's Power(s)

- Thomas Patton (Ph.D. Candidate, Cornell University, USA)
- Guillaume Rozenberg (Researcher, National Center of Scientific Research, LISST-Center of Social Anthropology, Maison de la Recherche, Université Toulouse le Mirail, France)
- Céline Coderey (Ph.D. Candidate, Université Aix-Marseille 1)
- Veronica Futterknecht (Ph.D. Candidate, Scientific Assistant, Department for the Studies of Religion, University of Vienna, Austria)

Session 2: The Weikza as a Champion of Buddhism

- Niklas Foxeus (Ph.D. Candidate, Dept. of History of Religions, ERG Stockholm University, Sweden)
- Keiko Tosa Professor (Graduate School of Global Studies, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan)

Session 3: Situation the Weikza Phenomenon Within the Burmese Religion and Beyond

- Patrick Pranke (Department of Humanities, University of Louisville, USA)
- Bénédicte Brac de la Perrière (Researcher, National Center of Scientific Research, Center on Southeast Asia, Paris)
- Juliane Schober (Professor of Religious Studies, Arizona State University, USA)

Discussant: Steven Collins

Abstract : Since its 'discovery' in the 1950s and 1960s by the first professional ethnographers of Burmese religion, notably E. Michael Mendelson and Melford E. Spiro, the *weikza* phenomenon has remained a controversial issue among its few observers and commentators. A *weikza* is marked by distinctive features. This religious figure is committed to the quest for nirvana, and yet, he is fully involved in worldly matters through the uses he makes of his supernatural power. He is capable of prolonging his life for thousands of years or more and also of manifesting himself through various means after his physical disappearance. Last but not least he may be the focus of multifarious cults burgeoning from different niches of the Burmese religious scene. With such puzzling attributes, the *weikza* has intrigued scholars and given birth to divergent, if not opposite characterizations.

Recently, this seemingly unique figure within the domain of Theravādin societies has been the object of a renewed interest. The Burma Studies Conference 2010 will be the occasion for gathering those scholars who have been researching the phenomenon so as to confront their materials, perspectives and questioning. The time seems ripe to take stock of the growing field of "*weikza* studies", a field enriching our understanding of Burmese religious dynamics.

6. Roundtable Discussion of Recent Work on Religion in Myanmar

Convenor: Jason Carbine (Whittier College, Philadelphia, USA)

Contact : jcarbine@whittier.edu

Participants :

- Jason Carbine (Whittier College, Philadelphia, USA)
- Juliane Schober (Professor of Religious Studies, Arizona State University, USA)
- Mike Charney (SOAS, University of London)

Abstract : Over the past few years, exciting new work has been produced, and more is appearing on the horizon. The round table will be intended to stimulate collective discussion between discussants and audience, and will focus on the recent asian ethnology volume by Koko Kawanami and Bénédicte Brac de la Perrière, Guillaume Rozenberg's work on renunciation and power, Mike Charney's book on powerful learning, Ingrid Jordt's book on the mass lay meditation movement, , Juliane Schober's forthcoming work on modalities/configurations of Buddhism, and some other materials as well as my book on Shwegyin monks if it is in press at that time.

7. Languages of Burma, From a Linguistic Point of View

Convenor: Alice Vittrant (Université Aix-Marseille 1, France)

Contact : vittrant@vjf.cnrs.fr

Abstract :

Participants :

- Mathias Jenny (Zürich Universität)
- Inna Lazareva (St.Petersburg State University)
- Patrick McCormick
- San San Hnin Thun (Cornell University)
- Alice Vittrant, (Université de Provence / CNRS-Lacito)
- Justin Watkins (SOAS, London)
- Shiro Yabu, (Professor Emeritus, Osaka University)
- Aung Win Naing (Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences, Pilbusongkram Rajabhat University, Phitsanulok) and Sandar Wyn (Northern Illinois University, USA)
- Christian Bauer (Professeur de philologie, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)
- Nathan Hill (SOAS, University of London)
- Sikder Monoare Murshed, (Professor and Chairperson, Dept. Of Linguistics, University of Dhaka)
- Khin Hnit Thit Oo (Yangon)
- Vadim B. Kasevich & Olga Garbouzova (University of St. Petersburg, Russia)
- Keisuke Huziwara (Kyoto University)

- Aung Kyaw Oo (Yangon)

Burmese is the national language of Burma, spoken by inhabitants of the large central plain drained by the Irrawaddy River. However, divergent dialects sometimes regarded as separate languages, are found in peripheral areas (cf. Arakanese), sometimes straddling neighbouring countries (cf. Marma). Unrelated languages, such as Mon-Khmer and Tai-Kadai languages, are also spoken in these areas, providing linguistic contacts that should be taken into account in linguistic studies of all these languages.

Finally, Burmese, as most of the written languages, shows diglossia, i.e. coexistence of different varieties (literacy, formal Burmese, less standardized and familiar Burmese), a diglossia that does not comprise Burmese Sign Language(s).

8. *The Wa Studies*

Convenor: Justin Watkins (Head of the Department of South East Asia, SOAS, London)

Contact: jw2@soas.ac.uk

Participants:

- Justin Watkins (SOAS, University of London)
- Magnus Fiskesjo (Cornell University)
- Sylvie Pasquet, CNRS, Centre Asie du Sud-Est)
- MA Jianxiong (UST, Hong Kong)
- Tom Kramer (TNI)
- Atsushi Yamada (Hokkaido University)
- Jeremy Milsom (UNODC)

Abstract: The Wa Studies panel draws together disparate strands of scholarly inquiry into the Wa, with a particular focus on the history of the Wa lands. Understanding this often marginalised area is increasingly valuable now, as the Wa seem poised to enter another period of instability and military conflict.

9. *India and Burma – The Shaping of (mis)perceptions*

Convenors: Julie Baujard (Université Aix-Marseille 1, France) & Renaud Egreteau (University of Hong Kong)

Contact: julie.baujard@zazie.net & regreteau@hotmail.com

Participants:

- Renaud Egreteau, (Hong Kong Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Centre of Asian Studies)
- Julie Baujard (Université de Provence-IRSEA)
- Andrew D. Jarvis (Ph.D. candidate, University of Cambridge)

Abstract: India has always had a peculiar relationship with its Burmese neighbor. Buddhism is often recalled as a strong cultural linkage, while transnational ethnic affinities and common geopolitical interests in contemporary Asia's context have tended to draw both countries closer. But despite sharing a 1,600 km-long border, India and Burma have long lived estranged from each other, and still remain so.

Colonial legacies, an autarkical Ne Winian regime survived by an even more xenophobic Burmese military and a strife-torn India's northeastern frontier have built up more concrete and perceived boundaries between India and Burma than often assumed.

Since 1993, India has been clearly pushing for a closer strategic interaction with the Burmese junta, which on its side welcomed another diplomatic courting from a regional power able to counterweight China's global thrust. However, beyond politics lies a wider cultural background that offers strong resistances to deeper and smoother Indo-Burmese interactions. Indeed, it will be tentatively argued through this panel that the recent Indo-Burmese rapprochement has often been misinterpreted by policymaking and academic circles. Many key elements of the India-Burma dyad have been misperceived or even disregarded, especially in India. The case of the various Burma-originated refugees (Chin, Kachin, Arakanese, Rohingya, Bamar...) is for instance particularly relevant. How are they perceived, treated, and considered by India, its political elite and civil society? The same questioning can be framed with the Burmese of Indian origin that have remained in Burma in spite of years of "indophobic" policies defined by Burmese leaders.

This panel thus proposes to highlight the way mutual perceptions are shaped on both sides of the border, with key case studies to be presented. How do India and Burma perceive each other – both India and Burma being understood as rational States, with their own multidimensional societies and histories? How does the Indian psyche portray its Burmese neighbor (its history, culture, people, regime...) and vice-versa? What are the contemporary political and cultural resonances of such (mis)perceptions?

Enduring resentment born out of the British colonial era when Indian communities were brought in Burma to run the colony, cross-border ethnic strife plaguing the Naga or Chin/Mizo communities and a Burmese democratic struggle that has produced wide refugee flows and renowned political dissidence since 1988, have all recently reframed those Indo-Burmese mutual perceptions. How are they evolving on the ground? Are they hindering closer political connections and understanding between India and Burma? The Chin community, which constitutes by far the stronger Burmese refugee community in India, offers a valuable case study of this difficult, if not inexistent, interactions between Indian and Burmese societies. The papers included in this clearly pluridisciplinary panel will thus question the possibilities of India and Burma drawing better mutual understanding through closer cultural exchanges and enhanced knowledge of each other.

10. The Moving Frontiers of Burma

Convenor: Maxime Boutry (CNRS-IRASEC, Bangkok, Thailand)

Contact: maximeboutry@gmail.com

Participants:

- Maxime Boutry (CNRS-IRASEC, Bangkok, Thailand)
- Wen-Chi Chang (Center for Asia-Pacific Area Studies, Academia Sinica, Taipei)
- Jacques Ivanoff (CNRS-IRASEC, Bangkok, Thailand)

- Alexander Horstmann (MMG-MPG for the study of ethnic and religious diversity, Göttingen)
- Kirsten McConnachie
- Kimura Mizuka (Graduate School of Human Sciences, Osaka University)
- Marion Sabrié (Ph.D candidate, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales/ Centre Asie du Sud-Est, Paris)
- Noriyuki Osada (Ph.D. candidate, The University of Tokyo)
- Tharaphi Than (SOAS, University of London)
- Su Lin Lewis (Ph.D. candidate, Faculty of History, Cambridge University)

Abstract: Few authors already underlined the relativity of the ethnical nature of conflicts between kingdoms in this region (for example between Ava and Pegu – Lieberman, 1978) and even the misuse of ethnical features to explain historical events (Aung Twin, 1996). At the contrary, we would like to explore how ethnicity and its construction may be of first importance in the margins’ negotiation of the Bamar’s (*phamar*) social space and thus in return, for its centralized identity. The question here is not to rewrite the construction’s history of the Union of Myanmar but to focus on the history’s interstices (Winichakul 2002) rather than on the centres, that means drawing the attention on marginal histories taking place on the frontiers, in asserting that they are places of assimilation/absorption, transformation and laboratory of cultural and social changes (Horstmann 2002) helping at building the political centres and thus the ideological conception of a “burmeseness”.

For example, studies on ethnic successions show that the delta societies had much of the features attributed to frontier societies (O’Connor 1995, Dao The Tuan and Molle, 2000) before becoming the nowadays rice bowl of Asia. However, despite bearing the term ‘ethnic’, we know few about the issues in terms of ethnicity and the socio- cultural processes engaged in these successions but the relation to some technical superiority. Nonetheless, a close look at the patron-client relationships at the margins, instead of institutionalized systems of Southeast Asian ‘centres’ as already shown (Scott, 1972), may enlighten some basic structures in the construction of the Bamar’s social space, enabling adaptability, assimilation, and social changes. Leach’s contribution on *The Frontiers of “Burma”* (1960) helped defining the limits between Valley and Hill people and emphasised their role as zones of exchanges and transformation of social structures situated in the in-between of these characterized societies. However, while he considers the transformation as definitive when switching from ‘minority’ to ‘majority’ societies in a one-way process, we conversely want to draw attention on the segmentation process (Boutry and Ivanoff, 2008) of groups issued from the dominant Bamar society in the contact of minorities or other majorities.

Therefore, we would like to explorer ‘ethnicity’ from the ‘Bamars’ point of view, the construction of their territory as a social space creating bonds on its ‘peripheries’ to structure its ‘centre’; and thus concentrate on the creation of these bonds redefining the moving frontiers of Burma, may it be through the appropriation of new environments (researches dealing with the Bamars’ relation to the sea may be of particular interest),

interrelations with other societies (either ‘minorities’ or ‘majorities’) and transnational societies.

11. Assessing resilience of political opposition as socio-political change in Burma, 1962-2009

Convenor: La Raw Maran (Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois, USA)

Contact : KachinUSA@aol.com

Participants :

- Maran La Raw (Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois, USA)
- Jane M. Ferguson (Australian National University, Australia)
- F.K. Lehman (U Chit Hlaing) (University of Illinois, USA)
- Miki Kajimura
- Kyi May Kaung

Abstract : The postcolonial era in Burma began in 1948, but it has been ruled since 1962 by a military-junta government. Believing that problems of state building and national identity stem from the rich diversity of ethnic-historical makeup, the central government set out to pursue a policy of forced cultural and political assimilation into a single mainstream of the Burman majority society. The effect is the marginalization of ethnic minority communities and cultures.

Yet, for all of forty-seven years, there have been no indications that ethnic minority *social systems* have generally been pushed to the brink, nor that their political cultures of opposition have ceased to function. To the contrary, marginalized societies have been able to demonstrate resilience as communities with a focus on being politically opposed to the central power.

Even where the central authorities have clearly established dominance by force over small ethnic communities, it is not clear what marginalization has accomplished; the PaO (in Shan State) and Rawang (a Kachin group in Kachin State) situations illustrate this perplexing development. The authorities have found it necessary to adopt different strategies in its bid to disable traditional political systems in the communities, but the communities have somehow proceeded to devise new ways to remain politically opposed to central authority. The underlying mechanics of these events appear to be to accommodate government dominance by means of short-term adaptive changes, but maintaining long-term goals and traditional culture.

For observers of socio-political dynamics and change in Burma today, the resilience of political opposition to centralized power in marginalized societies is arguably the most compelling topic, and the reasons are transparent as well as profound.

One, resilience for our purposes means viewing conflict relations from the *vantage opposite to the central government's*, and, *this is not a characteristic perspective of western scholarship*, specifically of political science and history. *Two*, political culture and opposition here is conflict of political vision and ideology, and given Burma's ethnic-cultural diversity, the impact is, predictably, both *longitudinal* along the lines of ethnic community differences, and *latitudinal* within the Burman ethnic majority community. The striking aspect is that armed resistance is a characteristic of non-Burman ethnic communities, whereas, among ethnic Burmans,

with which the military rulers themselves have been identified, it is a simmering incipient, periodically eruptive, behavior of the Burman polity.

Clearly, resilience of opposition, whether overt or incipient, goes deeper into society and culture, politics of opposition being the focus of expressed behavior from underlying dynamic processes. We understand very little of resilience in this sense because we have not asked the question about this in the first place.

12. Ethnic Unity, Ethnic Tensions, and Ethnic Diversity in Burma

Convenor: Jane M. Ferguson (The Australian National University)

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Participants:

- Jane M. Ferguson (Australian National University, Australia)
- Karin Dean (Talim University)
- Maran La Raw (Emeritus, University of Illinois, USA)
- James Scott (Yale University, USA)
- Ashley South (Australian National University, Australia)
- Lian Sakhong (Uppsala University, USA)
- Ayako Saito (Lecturer, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

Abstract: Given the tremendous ethnic and linguistic diversity in Burma, it is disappointing that Burma studies tend disproportionately to focus on the politics and practices of the Burman majority. Or, when ethnic relations are brought to critical attention, they are studied within a framework of an ethnic "problem" or, more sympathetically, "ethnic diversity" is taken as a burden of proof or explanation for non-Burman groups. Keeping these historical tendencies in mind, this panel will revisit the concept of ethnicity in the Burmese context, historically, politically, and ethnographically. In so doing, this panel seeks to address three questions relating to ethnicity in Burma: How have concepts and relations of ethnicity in Burma changed over time? In what ways might (relative) political privilege frame notions of ethnicity differently for some groups rather than others? And finally, will "ethnicity" remain a salient lens through which we can understand political and cultural configurations in Burma and beyond?

13. Burmese Regional and Popular Music: perspectives on shifting musical tastes

Convenor: Ward Keeler (University of Texas at Austin, USA)

Contact: ward.keeler@mail.utexas.edu

Participants:

- Gavin Douglas (The University of North Carolina at Greensboro)
- Jane Ferguson (The Australian National University)
- Ward Keeler (University of Texas at Austin, USA)
- Heather MacLachlan
- Christopher A. Miller & Ne Myo Aung
- Tasaw Lu (Center for Asia-Pacific Area Studies, Academia Sinica, Taipei)

- Gretel Schwoerer-Kohl
- Sayuri Inoue (Associate Professor, Osaka University)

Abstract: Burmese music enjoyed the attention of ethnomusicologists prior to the long period of its isolation, but then lost out to other musical traditions in Southeast Asia when access to Burma became difficult for foreign researchers. In recent years, a new set of foreign scholars have taken up the challenge of studying music's various forms in the country. Two participants look at materials, both print and recordings, from the early to mid twentieth century. Another looks at how ethnic groups and their respective musics meet up in the Shan States. Several scholars look at contemporary Burmese pop music. Focus on popular music implicates globalization because Burmese pop music is so clearly informed by international pop music models: several papers consider what Burmese musicians think they're doing when they take on the sounds of other places.

14. Globalization of Social and Political Spaces in Myanmar: Expansions, Contractions and Contestations

Convenor: Ko Ko Thett

Contact: kokothett@gmail.com

Participants:

- Kyaw Win Tun
- Soe Myint Aung
- Ian Levely
- Nwe Nwe Aye
- Ko Ko Thett
- Donald Seekins (Meio University)
- Amara Thiha (Uppsala University, Sweden)

Abstract: The panel addresses how socio-economic, cultural, political and media spaces in Burma/Myanmar have been opened up, tightened or contested by globalization. Compared to the developed countries in the northern hemisphere, the people of Myanmar live in a different 'time zone.' The military-socialist era's delusory autarky and self-isolation from 1962 to 1988 means that all things global, from the Beatles to post-modernism and from used Japanese cars to neo-liberalism, arrived at least one decade late in Burma. The US and the EU's economic and diplomatic isolation of the present-day Myanmar regime, which has been in power since the ill-fated 'people power movement' in 1988, has only contributed to the *status quo* bias of the country or 'the societal inertia' of its people in the new millennium.

As such, globalization came too little and too late for Myanmar's people. What does this mean to us? How has Myanmar's popular literature of the 1990's and 2000's expressed the population's feelings towards globalization? What are the 'themes' or salient features of globalization to be found in their contemporary literature? Has the regime been 'riding the wave of regressive globalization' by using geopolitical and natural resources factors to its advantages and developed globalized methods of coercion and control against the 'liberal aspirations' of the people, some of whom they have begun to label terrorists? Or the elite of the regime been benefiting from foreign investments by the multi-nationals which claim that they provide better life chances

that will lead to the expansion of political space inside Myanmar? What is the role of Myanmar media in all this? Despite severe restrictions on the freedom of speech, do the emergent ‘journal and chat-room cultures’ which have been tolerated to an extent by the authorities have a role in the country’s democratic ‘dialogue culture’?

The very notion that it is better to make the best use of limited political space and legislature politics inside the country than to confront the regime since the latter entails human cost and prolongs the deadlock has been contested. Is there any merit or potential for conflict transformation in this moot point? Has the Burmese opposition which have been responsible for ‘globalizing Burma problem’ become a victim of the globalized international system wherein sacrificing ‘freedom’ and ‘justice’ for the sake of ‘stability’ and ‘national security’ has become an international norm? All these issues will be tackled by five junior scholars in the panel titled ‘Globalization of Social and Political Spaces in Myanmar: Expansions, Contractions and Contestations.’

15. Burmese Education, History and Politics: The National and the Transnational

Convenor: Rosalie Metro (Cornell University, USA)

Contact: rose.metro@gmail.com

Participants:

- Nicolas Salem (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris, France)
- Brooke Treadwell (Indiana University, USA)
- A. MayOo Mutraw (Center for Constitutional Democracy, Indiana University Maurer School of Law, USA)
- Rosalie Metro (Cornell University, USA)
- Alison Remillard (Cornell University, USA)
- Dr. Zarni (London School of Economics and Political Science, UK)
- Bo Bo (SOAS)
- Estelle Cohenney-Vallier (Coordinator of Studio Xang at Chiang Mai)

Abstract: Given the close relationship between pedagogy and politics, critically examining education is an important way to understand both governmental priorities and Burmese peoples' resistance or acquiescence to those imperatives. In an era of globalization, these dynamics are even more complex, as curricula and students cross borders. This panel addresses both the historical dimension of schooling and the current educational situation of Burmese people both inside the country and transnationally.

U Myo Oo will present a paper entitled "The Process of Nation-Building in Burma during the Colonial Period," which analyzes the school texts used at that time, tracking the emergence of modern Burmese prose and the introduction of history and civic education directed toward promoting a homogeneous society and forging a national identity.

Romain Caillaud investigates similar themes in his paper “Educating the Nation,” discussing the transition from the colonial system of education to one oriented toward nation-building in an independent Myanmar. He will argue that after

1948 the Burmese State strived to expand its reach and control over the education system, progressively curtailing the ability of other actors, such as missionaries or ethnic community leaders, to teach students.

Nicolas Salem will follow these issues into the current era in his paper “The Union of Myanmar as told to children”, in which he analyzes recurring themes in the discourse on the nation in history and geography curricula presently in use. In order to do so, he will present some of the evolutions in the content of those textbooks through the different phases of Myanmar history.

A. MayOo Mutraw analyzes the intersection of education and law, arguing that the 2008 Constitution's attempt to address ethnic diversity is based on a faulty reading of the past expressed in 9th and 10th standard history textbooks, which actually promotes ethnic conflict.

Brooke Treadwell shifts the focus from curriculum to educators' reactions to it in her paper, “Pockets of Resistance: Teachers’ Appropriation of Education Policy in Contemporary Burma.” Using data from 2008 interviews with former students and teachers from Burma, she explores how teachers in Burmese government schools implement, resist, and creatively reinterpret and official education policy in their classrooms.

Rosalie Metro offers an analysis of how Burmese curricula and educational priorities change in exile in Thailand. In her paper "Negotiations on a history curriculum for Burmese students in Thailand," she reports on her work with a multi-ethnic group of Burmese teachers to develop a version of the past that is acceptable to all stakeholders, while also giving students an understanding of why they have come to be migrants and refugees.

Alison Remillard’s paper, “Navigating exclusion: Burmese refugee youth experiences in the United States,” is a further step in examining the globalization of education. She describes how Burmese adolescents enter into the U.S. navigating multiple discourses and managing multiple identities, highlighting the voices of Burmese students and the ways they are finding, and making a place of their own, within their schools and communities.

Dr. Zarni has agreed to serve as respondent for this panel.

16. Impact of Globalization on Burmese Economy

- *Convenor:* Myoe Myint (Columbia University, USA) & Vicky Thein (Curtin University of Technology, Australia)

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Participants:

- U Khin Maung Nyo (Economist, Chief Editor, World Economic Journal)
- Dr. Takahashi Akio (Professor, University of Tokyo)
- Mr. Toshihiro Kudo (Director, Institute of Developing Economies, JETRO)
- U Myat Thein, Rector (Retd.), Yangon Institute of Economics
- Ikuko Okamoto (Institute of Developing Economies-JETRO, Visiting Fellow, ANU)

- Myoe Myint (*Energy) (Discussant: Htwe Htwe)
- Htwe Htwe (*privatization) (Discussant: Myoe Myint)
- Nicky Black (Ph.D. Strategic Management, University of Waikato)
- Aye Aye Khine (Risk Management Officer, Save the Children, Myanmar)

Abstract: As globalization, international trade and economic development of a country is directly related, I would like to submit the panel proposal for discussing the impact of globalization on the economic development of Burma from historical, contemporary and future perspectives.

International trade is widely regarded as the major economic factor that has been shaping the world by international integration and globalization. Burma is not an exception no matter how it has been isolated from the world since 1962 when the military took over civil power. Impact of globalization in one country should be considered from a broad range of factors for a long period of time. As Prof. Ronald Findlay pointed out in his recent book *Power and Plenty*, “Contemporary globalization, and its economic and political consequences, have not been arisen out of a vacuum, but from a worldwide process of uneven economic development that has been centuries, if not millennia, in the making.”

With the dawn of Independence in 1948, Burma had great desire of becoming an industrial country as many of the neighboring countries had similar aspirations. When neighboring countries switched their strategy in favor of agriculture and export promotion in mid-1960s, Burma heavily emphasized industrialization to the relative neglect of the agriculture sector under the banner of ‘Burmese Way to Socialism’. As a result of nationalization and mismanagement, economic situation was deteriorated in 1970s with decline in rice exports, overall exports/imports, and investment. Although the Socialist government implemented reforms in early 1980s, the economy deteriorated further and Burma officially became a least developed nation in 1987.

Overall economic policy framework was significantly changed by adoption of a market-oriented policy when SLORC/SPDC came to power in 1988. This liberalization measure promoted private sector participation, attracted foreign investment and boosted GDP in mid-1990s. But, management under control-minded military mindset, Burma is now regarded as the second least free economy in the world. Prof. Myat Thein analyzed these major developments of Burma (1948-2000) in chronological order in his book.

Amid investment and trade sanctions imposed by Western countries, neighboring ASEAN, India and China increase trade with Burma in 2000s and favorably approach for tapping energy resources. Discovery of commercial scale natural gas deposit at Rakhine offshore, together with existing Yadana and Yetagun offshore fields, Burma clearly became a potential supplier of natural gas to energy-hungry neighbors. In addition, Burma has considerable indigenous primary energy potential such as hydropower. There is no doubt that energy sector will play a vital role in the future because natural gas export accounted for 40% of total export today. Unfortunately, electricity is a luxury good in Burma as merely 5% of population has access to electricity.

17. Myanmar and Asean

Convenor: Paul Sarno (Lecturer in Southeast Asia, Burma Studies Group & Asia Society Member, USA)

Contact: Paulsarno@aol.com

Participants:

- Kyaw Yin Hlaing
- Paul Sarno (Lecturer in Southeast Asia, Burma Studies Group & Asia Society Member, USA)
- Robert Taylor
- Tin Maung Maung Than

Abstract: Since Myanmar joined ASEAN in 1997, its relations with that organization have been mostly tenuous and sometimes contentious. The panel will explore various aspects of this issue, including the disparity between Myanmar's interaction with ASEAN as a body and its bi-lateral relations with the other ASEAN members. This dichotomy will be examined within the context, among others, of human rights, political reconciliation, refugees, trade and investment.

18. Multiple paradigms of (and for) Burmese/Myanmar democracy

Convenor: Hans-Bernd Zöllner (Lecturer, Universities of Hamburg and Passau)

Contact: habezett@t-online.de

Participants:

- Hans-Bernd Zöllner (Lecturer, Universities of Hamburg and Passau)
- Wolfram Schaffar (Hildeshem)
- Pinitbhand Paribatra (Ph.D. candidate, Northern Illinois University, USA)
- Arthur Minsat (London)
- Myint Zan (Associate Professor, School of Law, Multimedia University, Malacca, Malaysia)
- Wylma C. Samaranayake-Robinson (University of Hawaii-Manoa, Honolulu)
- Yoshihiro Nakanishi (Area Studies Center, Institute of Developing Economies)
- (N.N.)
- Swapna Bhattacharya (Chakraborti)
- Pinitbhand Paribatra (Ph.D. candidate, Northern Illinois University, USA)

Abstract: Since 1988, “democracy” has become a keyword in the discussion of Burma's/Myanmar's past, present and future. A variety of factors, among them the trend towards a reduction of complex issues in public discourses within the global village, have contributed to the emergence of a dichotomous paradigm sharply contrasting forces implementing a concept of “fake” democracy with those striving for the realization of “true” democratic values. This discussion within Myanmar/Burma, however, is rarely put in a broader context of the debates about democratization and the meaning of democracy in political science, law/legal studies or history. E.g. whereas phenomena like different waves of democratization (Huntington), the come-

back of authoritarianism, constitutionalism and the judicialization of politics, or the hegemony of US-style liberal democracy over Westminster-style democracy are issues of scientific debate in the respective disciplines, the discussion on what democracy can or should mean in the context of Myanmar/Burma remains largely distanced from these international discussions.

In view of the election scheduled for 2010, the panel intends to put forward some contributions that may lead to a differentiated and multi-dimensional conceptualisation and treatment of the topic. Multiple paradigms that shaped the perception of democracy in Burma/Myanmar since the 1920s both inside and outside the country will be introduced and analysed. Finally, the panellists will try to offer some assessments on the “Roadmap” of which the elections of 2010 are a constitutive part.

It is intended to provide the participants in the panel with a beforehand summary of each contribution in order to facilitate discussion.

19. The Geostrategic Element in the Transition in Myanmar

Convenor: David Fouquet (Centre Européen de Recherches Internationales et Stratégiques)

Contact: david.fouquet@kuhbier.com

Participants:

- David Fouquet (Centre Européen de Recherches Internationales et Stratégiques)
- Zairina Othman (AP, Program of Strategic Studies and International Relations, Univesiti Kebangsaan Malaysia)
- Saw Myat Sandy

Abstract: This panel will be devoted to the country’s contemporary external relations.

20. Open panel

Participants:

Nat thematic:

- Phyu Phyu Win
- Per-Arne Berglie (Professor, History of Religions, Stockholm University)
- Yukako Iikuni (Visiting Researcher, The National Museum of Ethnology, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan)

Muslim thematic:

- Jean Berlie
- Maulawi Muhammed Yasinn

Miscellaneous :

- Saw Tun and Sandar Wynn (Northern Illinois University, DeKalb)
- Oliver Pollak (Department of History, University of Nebraska, Omaha)

- Dilip Kumar Barua (Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Dhaka)
- Kevin Woods

21. Buddhism in the Burmese Society: A Multi-faced Religion

Convenor: Guy Lubeigt, IRASEC/CNRS

Contact: gehel912@gmail.com

Participants:

- Guy Lubeigt (CNRS, IRASEC-Bangkok)
- Ko Ko Thett (Helsinki, Finland)
- John Mensing (University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka)

Abstract: Regarding Burmese Buddhism, academic studies have been mostly devoted to the philosophical, spiritual and ritual aspects of the religion. Members of the Sangha are generally recognized as saints by the faithful, while their teachings and writing are praised to be close to the original teachings of the Buddha. Therefore the practice of Buddhism by the monks and the devotees appear to be exempt from questioning. Compared to the monolithic block of the religion, terrestrial aspects of Buddhism are often ignored by field studies.

Burmese Buddhism had conflicting relationships with the socialist military regime from 1962 to 1979. Then in 1980, a collaborative link was established with the socialists. The unification of the Burmese sects and the creation of a *State Sangha Maha Nayaka*, modelled on the structure of the socialist state, nominally brought the monks under the spiritual authority of the State Sangha. As a result, the whole Burmese Sangha came under the control of the Military. In 1988 the actual junta abandoned socialism and reinforced its collaboration with the religious establishment. Subsequently, generals were courting presiding monks of the main monasteries of the Union. In exchange for their tacit or explicit support of the regime, many influential monks have been showered with monetary gifts, rice, oil donations and honorary titles.

Following the uprising of the young monks in 2007, the relationship between the two partners seems to have taken a sour turn. While some monks are persecuted by the military regime, the majority of the Sangha remains silent. However, in a globalized world, an increasing number of monks and devotees have the possibility to access information. They can now openly or covertly question the political, economical and social effects of the association between the *Sangha Maha Nayaka* and the junta.

Some questions to consider are: To what extent the courses on Buddhist culture, that youth are encouraged to attend, prepare the citizens to fully participate in the future *flourishing democracy* of the Union? How and to what extent the military regime encourages or pressures society by using Buddhism to shape the future of the Union? How the propaganda apparatus gives credence to a deep Buddhist faith of the ruling junta's members? Is there any benevolent attitude of the regime toward the needs of its citizens? How the regime plans to spread its psychological operations to the Buddhist and non-Buddhist population of the Union? To what extent does the military control the Buddhist Missionary Schools and Universities that are spreading Burmese Buddhism all over the world, and to what purpose?

22. Museography and Anthropology of Art

Convenor: Christine Hemmet, Catherine Raymond (*Director, Center for Burma Studies, Northern Illinois University*)

Contact: craymond@niu.edu

Abstracts:

Participants :

23. NGO in Myanmar

Convenor: Carine Jaquet

Contact: carine.jaquet@gmail.com

Participants :

- Ashley South (Independent Researcher)
- David Scott Mathieson (Human Rights Watch)
- Carine Jaquet (Université Paris 1 La Sorbonne; Trócaire) and Khnit Hnit Thit Oo, (Université de Rouen)
- Kyaw Soe Lwin (City University of Hong Kong)
- Lyndal Barry (Pyoe Pin)

Abstract : Though many sectors framing Burmese society are state ruled or driven, Burmese civil society illustrates the existence of some spaces related to but independent from the military regime. A focus on the international as well as local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) demonstrates a relative diversity in their mandates, impacts on and relations with the regime. To maintain their precarious margin of action, these social actors deploy strategies to be operational in the periphery of the government power while dealing with prevailing humanitarian crises. This panel will explore various levels from the organizational to the individual to provide analyses on NGOs' roles in the contemporary Burma social arena, during the era of globalization. It also highlights methodological issues for researchers willing to work on sensitive issues.

The international community perceives non-governmental organizations as increasingly prominent drivers in creating and using the available space to bring about social and political change. The scope of strategies and conditions of developmental organizations will be analyzed through the cases of one local and four international NGOs. At the community level, a case study of Chin State-based local organizations illustrates the creation, expansion and practices of local NGOs operating in one of the most remote areas of the country. The humanitarian response of local communities to Cyclone Nargis in the Irrawaddy Delta demonstrates how Burmese NGOs attained noteworthy achievements, though encountering common limits in their attempts to support social and political change. An HIV-focused civil society organizations cases study shows how these groups can influence policies, despite being limited by a lack of coherent approaches and coordination. Without a more strategic methodology, filters hinder productive dialog with local authorities, obstructing perspectives of policy change.

At the individual level, people living in areas affected by natural disaster and armed conflict in Karen State rely on audacious and creative, but often harmful, self-protection strategies. The definition and management of their own 'protection' will be

explored. The focus of most of international messaging on Burma is based on a dominant narrative of simplistic human rights ‘fetishisms’, rather than on a more complex and variegated view that can more comprehensively reflect the reality on the ground. There are different broad layers of state control and methodologies should be calibrated accordingly.

24. Myanmar/Burmese Literature

Convenor: Marie-Helene Cardinaud (INALC), Paris)

Contact:

Participants :

- Daw Ju
- Sabai Shwe Demaria
- Marie-Helene Cardinaud (INALCO, Paris)
- Denise Bernot