

**INTERNATIONAL BURMA STUDIES CONFERENCE  
OCTOBER 5-7, 2012  
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**

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**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5  
PANEL ONE: GLIMPSES OF MYANMAR'S VERY LONG HISTORY (1)  
REGENCY ROOM**

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**A LABYRINTH IMAGE IN THE MAHOSADHA JATAKA  
LILIAN HANDLIN**

In Pagan's Mahanipata's hierarchization, Mahosadha was superseded only by Vessantara, reflecting the narrative's local resonance and importance, its placement enabled by the nonconcatenated rebirths serialization in Pagan's revered materials. Mahosadha, usually associated with perfecting "wisdom" and "knowledge" was popular in Pagan and later, among other matters for its riddles whose existential expressivities informed centuries of legal theories. One scholarly riddle about Mahosadha's Pagan take is visible in elaborate images of a labyrinth, illustrating the protagonist's supernatural powers. Later settings elsewhere adapted the labyrinth to illustrate the setting for Vessantara's exile. The image seeped into Pagan from the eastern Mediterranean, a proverbial drop in the bucket that was the immensely complex interaction between Buddhism and first the ancient world, and later Islam, currently vibrant subjects of scholarly inquiry. What was the significance of this enigmatic construct and what does it suggest about Pagan's sense of imagination, a concept whose broader implications have recently be explicated in David Shulman's brilliant More than Real, History of the Imagination in South India ( 2012).

**SADDHAMMASIRI AND HIS PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE  
ALEIX RUIZ-FALQUES**

Saddhammasiri is a well-known grammarian and author from Pagan. It is likely he lived in the 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. According to Bode's Pali Literature of Burma (p.20) 'he was probably among the first to use Burmese as a literary instrument'. He translated a Sanskrit work on astrology into Burmese – this work, unfortunately, is not extant. Saddhammasiri is mainly known for an important Pāli treatise in verse called Saddatthabhedacintā 'Treatise on the difference between word and meaning'. This work belongs to the so-called 15 minor grammatical textbooks and is mainly a philosophical work containing references to a very ancient tradition of Indian linguistics. According to Bode (PLB: 20), the Saddatthabhedacintā is a 'grammatical treatise' where 'we catch a glimpse of a culture that recalls Aggavaṃsa' and she adds: 'Saddhammasiri's grammar is based partly on Kaccāyana's Pali aphorisms and partly on Sanskrit authorities'. This statement is fundamentally wrong because the Saddatthabhedacintā is not a grammar. In my paper I will explain the actual content of Saddhammasiri's work, and I will place it within the general context of Buddhist discussions on the philosophy of language, most of which overlap with Buddhist metaphysics. My aim, then, is to offer a vivid sketch of Saddhammasiri as a medieval Burmese intellectual.

**BEADS OF SAMON VALLEY**  
**TERENCE TAN**

The Late Prehistoric society of the Samon predates the ancient Pyu civilization by about 500 years. Samon sites were scattered from Hanlin to Pynmana in Myanmar, but the principle concentration was based in Samon Valley. It is an area around present-day Pyawbwe, Yamethin and Tharzi along the Samon River which flows northwards into the Myit Nge River which in turn runs into the Ayeyarwaddy.

Samon beads are generally made of both organic and non-organic materials. The beauty of the Samon beads is in their varied forms, patterns, producing techniques and iconology. The mystery lies in what form of superstitious or mystical role the beads played in the Samon culture; another mystery is the mobility of the beads that spread to the far reaches of the land and into the society of various races, adding to the formation of their unique culture.

By analyzing the forms and producing techniques of the beads, one could see the transition from pre-Buddhist belief to the growing strength of Buddhism. This paper focuses on the transitions as noted through ornaments, especially beads and their forms, materials, production techniques and iconology, and the change from Bronze Iron Age (circa 700 BC – 300 AD) to the Pyu Period (200 BC - 900 AD).

**A BURMESE COSMOLOGICAL PALM-LEAF MANUSCRIPT FROM THE BURMA ART COLLECTION**  
**AT NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**  
**CATHERINE RAYMOND**

Drawing from the culmination of Henry Ginsburg's research, entitled Thai Manuscript Painting, this paper aims to present our recent explication of a unique palm leaf manuscript in the Burma Art Collections at Northern Illinois University containing differing depictions of Buddhist cosmology interspersed with dense textual notes between illustrations of Mt. Meru and the various hells; a diagram of Lake Anotatta and of the four rivers; cross sections of the Four Islands; and the Buddhapada. We will use our own recent and ongoing digital archiving of Lao, Thai, and Burmese temple architecture and interior décor to discuss how manuscripts like this could have served as prototypes transmitting mandatory iconographic formulae for designing, constructing and adorning Buddhist temples in Burma and Northern Thailand.

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**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5**  
**PANEL TWO: LINGUISTICS (1)**  
**CAPITAL ROOM NORTH**

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**NEW LINGUISTIC DATA ON THE PYU LANGUAGE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO OLD BURMESE**  
**JULIAN K. WHEATLEY**

In the year in which the ancient Pyu cities of Burma have been nominated to the World Heritage List, it is fitting that we try to take stock of new data on the Pyu language that has come to light in the course of the considerable archeological discoveries of recent decades. Aung-Thwin (*The Mists of Ramanna: The Legends that was Lower Burma*, 2005) has argued for a greater emphasis on the continuity of upper Burma traditions (interior and agricultural), so it is likely that the Pyu language is represented as a substratum in Old Burmese. The question is, assuming the paucity of information on Pyu can be augmented by new discoveries, and will we be able to make interesting inferences about the relationship between Pyu and Burmese given their similarities in structure and provenience? In any case, we will be able to report on the prospects for Pyu language studies, and comment on issues and problems.

**CONNECTING CHIANG: HISTORICAL, LINGUISTIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL POSSIBILITIES**  
**JOHN HARTMANN**

“Chiang” and its linguistic variants, appears as the noun headword in the names of Tai population centers, such as Keng Tung (Burma), Jing Hong (Yunnan), Chiang Mai (Thailand), and Xiang Khuang (Laos). They were shown in previous research to be entrepots located near or along major waterways in the Middle Mekong River drainage basin (Hartmann et al. 2010). This conference presentation centers on the construction of a new map connecting the “chain of chiang” from Yunnan, through northern Burma, Thailand, Laos and finally Vietnam to a terminus at present-day Hanoi. New data from Dehong, a Tai region in western Yunnan, raises the possibility that this area is a proximate origin of the word “chiang,” that was borrowed by early Tai agriculturalists as they expanded outward from their homeland in the border area of Guangxi and Tonkin and established communities and trade centers to the west. Proximity of Dehong to Tibet raises the further possibility of a Tibetan linguistic and cultural origination of the term, which most likely is not Tai, but rather Sino-Tai. Archeological evidence will be presented as well.

**ON LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL BORROWING IN THE JINGPHO (KACHIN) LANGUAGE**  
**KEITA KURABE**

The Jingpho or Kachin language is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in Kachin State and Shan State, Burma and adjacent areas of China and India. The total Jingpho population is estimated to be 650,000. Most of them live in Northern Burma. Geographically, Jingpho is located in the heartland

of the Tibeto-Burman speech area, and it has been pointed out that Jingpho stands at the linguistic 'crossroad' of Tibeto-Burman languages, sharing a number of linguistic features with other

languages of Tibeto-Burman family.

In this presentation, I will provide a description and analysis of both lexical and grammatical borrowing in Jingpho based on my data collected during my field research in Northern Burma. The main issues and findings discussed in this study are as follows:

- 1) Jingpho has adopted a number of loanwords from Shan, Burmese and Chinese with which it has come in contact for long periods of time. I will determine the relative chronology of borrowings on the basis of phonological facts.
- 2) Jingpho has a number of areal patternings of linguistic properties shared by many other languages of Southeast Asia, ranging from lexico-semantic to grammatical features, such as 'areal caiques', compounds whose semantic structure are constant across geographically contiguous languages regardless of their genetic affiliation, and 'areal grammaticalizations', in which the same lexical items develop into grammatical forms with similar functions.
- 3) Typologically unusual grammatical features of Jingpho can be explained in terms of language contact.

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**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5**  
**PANEL THREE: LITERATURE AND POWER**  
**CAPITAL ROOM SOUTH**

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**WOMEN ACTIVIST WRITERS OF BURMA SINCE 1988: AGENTS OF CHANGE AND COURAGE**  
**EMILY A. EHMER**

Many people are familiar with National League for Democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, but what about other women in Burma whose writings have played a major role in advocating courage, perseverance and nonviolence for more than 20 years since the 1988 protests? This research examines the work of several female authors and activists of Burma – some who remain inside the country and others who have left – whose discourse has transformed women from victim status to agents of political change and courage. The paper focuses on the writings and activism of Ma Thida, San San Nweh, Thin Thin Aung, Zoya Phan, and Khet Mar. By examining these writings through a gendered lens, the women's discourse reveals what Holloway Sparks conceptualizes as feminist dissident citizenship – “the practices of marginalized citizens who publicly contest prevailing arrangements of power” (Sparks, 1997, p. 75). Both Sparks and gender theorist Judith Butler describe how women use communication to overcome the precariousness of living in a militarized state. Some women's stories were never published, while others used fiction to carry political messages that were often hidden to the casual reader. Some women who have left Burma have since turned to political activism through involvement in nongovernmental organizations promoting change. The research counters colonial and post-colonial discourses about women of Burma as victims of political struggle and as spiritually inferior to men. Instead, these women practice courage and perseverance to make their claims heard.

**THE IMPACTS OF OCCIDENTALIST LITERATURES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF RACIST IDEAS  
AND RISE OF ULTRA-NATIONALISM IN CONTEMPORARY MYANMAR (BURMA)  
AMARA THIHA**

This paper describes the impacts of occidental literatures on the development of racism and ultra-nationalism in contemporary Burma with the historical and discourse analysis. Ongoing public debates and campaigns against the Rohingya immigrants on the Burmese cyberspace have showed the revitalizing of racists ideas and developing the neo-fascist, ultranationalist movements within Burmese Society. By using the Ian Berman's Occidentalism, analysis had done on Facebook and Burmese Blogosphere with netnography method. Results show that rejections of Rohingya are more than immigration issue and rather consider them as a threat to the Burmese culture, Buddhism and national identity. They also promote racial segregation to maintain the purity of Burmese blood and culture. This racist discourse found on the internet, refers to the occidental literature in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries for the nation building process and creating the national identity through the rejection of western values. By referring to the Burmese Occidentalism, ultranationalists have rejected Human Rights values as universal, considering them as Eurocentric values of modernity. Both secular and non-secular occidental thoughts that have been developed during the anti-colonial movements as well as anti-communist propaganda are used. Non-secular arguments articulate a discourse that resembles the contemporary European radical right wing. The failures of nation building since independence and revitalizing of Occidentalism push Burma into the pit of ultra-nationalism and neo-fascism by which military regime has endeavored to establish itself during the past decades.

**HOW TO RAISE THE 'BO'S NATIONALISM IN THE COLD WAR BURMESE PRESS  
MAUNG BO BO**

Burma passed a period of political violence and wars since 1942 and it could have been controlled by a strong political institution only after two military coups in the 1960s. This institution was the Burma Army that was founded by its young radical leftists with the sponsor of the wartime Japanese army. Thus some scholars assume the army has two traits of political inclination; fascism or ultra-rightist nationalism from the Japanese and its root of leftist radicalism in the pre-war Burmese anti-colonial movement. Here I would like to find out how these extreme political tendencies of the army overwhelmed Burmese politics for at least a quarter or half a century since 1962. I will use the vernacular periodicals circulated by the army's psychological warfare unit in the 1950s. With the help of ex-communist staff, the Burma Army synthesized its own socialism in accordance with the Burmese radical xenophobic nationalism and Theravada Buddhism and ruled the country amidst ethnic conflict and economic decline till 1988.

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**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5**  
**PANEL FOUR: HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS IN CONTEMPORARY MYANMAR**  
**SANDBURG AUDITORIUM**

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**A POPULATION-BASED ASSESSMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN KAREN STATE,  
BURMA**  
**WILLIAM DAVIS**

In January 2012, Physicians for Human Rights used multi-staged cluster sampling to assess human rights violations, access to healthcare, and food security in Eastern Burma. Notably, 15% of people who responded said they were forced to porter for an armed group, and 14% said they were forced to do another kind of labor. Some significant barriers to accessing healthcare were having to travel too far (59%), high cost of transport/ travel (63%), and other barriers (30%).

We measured household hunger using a scale piloted and tested by USAID. According to this scale, 71% of households reported little or no hunger, 13% reported moderate hunger, and 15% reported severe hunger. Nearly half (39-56%) of households reported that they did not have enough food to eat in their houses in August, September, and October. For other health conditions, 6.2% of households reported that someone in that household had diarrhea in the last two weeks, and 4.8% reported that someone had night blindness in the last two weeks.

The study results show that human rights abuses continued in Eastern Burma despite the elections of 2010. Implications for ceasefire talks in this area include protection of civilians and increasing access to healthcare.

**CULTURAL RESISTANCE IN BURMA: LOCAL MEANING-MAKING IN THE WORK OF MINORITY  
RIGHTS ACTIVISTS**  
**EMILY HONG**

In the universalizing discourse of human rights, “culture”—as a reified, static thing—has often been perceived as a barrier to the realization of international human rights norms. Burma provides a particularly illuminating context for current debates in human rights and anthropology around the tension between “rights” and “culture,” because of the critical role of rights activists from its ethnic, religious, and linguistic minority communities. In this paper, I will explore the processes that minority activists from Burma set into motion at the grassroots level—from the (re) articulation of international discourse on cultural rights, to the mobilization of tactics to resist state suppression of minority rights.

Minorities in Burma have for decades faced and resisted widespread and systematic human rights abuses. Though cultural rights, including ‘the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, and to use their own language in private and in public’ (UN Declaration on Minorities), are just one bundle of rights amongst many that minority communities have fought for, the act of drawing from and mobilizing the very thing —culture, in a broad sense—that is being suppressed, to fight back is a particularly powerful move. Drawing upon ethnographic research in Burma and on the Thai-Burma border, I will explore the ways in

which minority activists simultaneously invoke “rights” and “culture,” through the mobilization of cultural and religious meaning and symbols in literature, rituals, festivals, and ethnic national days.

**FORMER POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PATTERNS OF RE-SUBJECTIVIZATION**  
**ELLIOTT PRASSE-FREEMAN**

Rapid political reforms in Burma have sponsored state-centric responses which misapprehend the state’s capacity and constitution. Excessive faith in top-down initiatives risks marginalizing other actors, including a robust (but politically quiescent) Civil Society sector. Civil Society groups require politicization in order to take on a new role of balancing the state, mobilizing citizens, etc. Former political prisoners may provide this political catalyst, both expanding the space for legitimate and non-threatening political action and encouraging CS to evolve. However, former political prisoners may remain incapable of both navigating their collective trauma and transitioning from solely espousing a politics of eternal opposition to also constructing positive politics. The paper will conduct an ethnography of political prison, examining it as a space that nearly every regime opponent has long been required to pass through, becoming both heterotopic - and in which processes of re-subjectivization change prisoners fundamentally – but perhaps also quarantine zones: where that re subjectivization creates a gap between them and those (both citizens and fellow activists) who they are now expected to work with, making it so that they can never leave – remaining instead within the opposition office or the border hideout.

**WHY PRESS FREEDOM IS NOT ENOUGH: HUMAN RIGHTS, PEACE-BUILDING AND THE MULTI-ETHNIC PUBLIC SPHERE**  
**LISA BROOTEN**

Recent rapid changes in Burma/Myanmar have included a media development conference in March 2012, revisions to media laws, a rush of donor interest in media development, and debates about the role and future of exile media in the country’s public sphere. This paper, based primarily on recent interviews but also drawing on decades of research with journalists and media policymakers both inside the country and in exile, explores current efforts to develop a multi-ethnic Burmese public sphere. Drawing from critical analyses of human rights discourse and international “media freedom indicators,” international legal theory, public sphere theory, and lessons learned from peace-building media projects worldwide, this paper calls for a recognition that press freedom, while vital, is not enough. Based on narrow neoliberal conceptions of the role of media as tools for information transmission that have proven problematic here and elsewhere, press freedom alone is an insufficient tool in the development of a genuinely multi-ethnic and peace-promoting public sphere. The paper provides an overview of efforts to develop a healthy mediascape in countries in transition worldwide, the role of media in the development of individual and collective identities and community values, as well as the history and development of the unique Burmese media “duopoly” and its current potential for promoting change. The paper offers an assessment of best practices, lessons learned and pitfalls to avoid as journalists, media makers and policymakers work toward a new era of openness.

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**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5**  
**PANEL FIVE: GLIMPSES OF MYANMAR'S VERY LONG HISTORY (2)**  
**REGENCY ROOM**

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**COMMERCIALIZING THE UPPER BURMA RICE CORE**  
**JÖRG SCHENDEL**

It is an article of faith that pre-colonial Burma's economy centered on wet rice agriculture. Yet recent writings have already emphasized that recurrent droughts and subsistence crises forced cultivators in Upper Burma to diversify into dry crops.

In this paper, I shall argue that these trends were dramatically altered and augmented after the British annexation of Pegu in 1852. Emerging and growing trade with the expanding rice agriculture in British Burma and markets overseas vastly improved the marketing opportunities of Upper Burma's cultivators, which they used by increasingly growing and selling cash crops, cattle, and textiles, and by working in the rice harvest in the delta. The result was a more diversified rural economy, in which cultivators and their families were less threatened by famine and may have increased their incomes. Agricultural diversification continued after British colonization in 1886, with socioeconomic implications very different from those caused by the rice monoculture of the Burma Delta. Looking at Upper Burma, the core of the pre-colonial Burmese polity will thus help us reassess the nature and extent of economic change in Southeast Asia, both before and after colonization.

**SANCTIFYING OLD AND NEW KNOWLEDGE IN A NINETEENTH CENTURY BURMESE PRÉCIS OF  
BUDDHIST COSMOGRAPHY**  
**FRANCOIS TAINURIER**

Preserved at the Meikthila's University Library the manuscript presented here offers an overview of the late nineteenth century Burmese knowledge in Buddhist cosmography. Like all black parabaik, 'folded manuscripts', the manuscript was used as a notebook and learning tool for those who had access to it and the information it contains presumably reflects a standard level of knowledge in that field at that time. The manuscript features the following maps: map about the 'nine constellations' (taya ko ba), 'twenty-seven lunar mansions' (nekha hna-hseh hkunit lon), the Buddhist universe (sakyawala), 'Sri Lanka island' (Thiho gyun), two maps of Buddhist India (Bodhi tree, seven stations, and sixteen great provinces), signs of zodiac (yathi).

While most of the maps reflect old Buddhist and Vedic knowledge, the illustration of a map of Sri Lanka offers a striking feature within the sequence. Why was a map of Sri Lanka inserted in this sequence? Was the map drawn based on data gathered by monks who had traveled to Sri Lanka over various missions in the mid nineteenth century? Was it drawn based upon information collected from Buddhist written sources? How were Buddhist sites in this map ordered? What would have been the ordering principles for mapping these sites? These are questions the presentation will attempt to answer.

In doing so, it will be shown that the confrontation between old and new knowledge helps to understand how late nineteenth century Buddhist literati produced, ordered, and connected new knowledge within a larger corpus of existing references.

**TROUBLES IN SIAM – THE LAST YEARS OF THE DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY’S LODGE IN  
AYUTTHAYA, 1760-1767  
LODEWIJK WAGENAAR**

Documents kept in the National Archives in Jakarta provide a unique look at the very last years of the presence of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in Siam. At the threatening appearance of the invading Burmese forces in 1760, Nicolas Bang – the chief of the Dutch trading post – tried to escape and drowned. In a letter to Batavia (now Jakarta), his successor Abraham Werndlij reported in 1762 and 1763 on the poor quality of the goods left behind; then in the possession of the late chief’s son Michael, being the only member of the Bang family still alive.

In the paper "Troubles in Siam", the author will bring the reader to the small lodge and neighboring compound, will dwell upon the *raison d’être* of the Company in Siam, and then will narrate the years of declining trade and the dramatic last episode of Ayutthaya. This grand capital was ransacked and finally burnt down completely in 1767, after the second Burmese invasion. The modest Dutch lodge could not escape that sad fate, and was itself plundered and completely destroyed. Most of the inhabitants of the compound were killed or taken away as slaves. Recently the site has been studied profoundly during excavations of the past years.

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**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5  
PANEL SIX: THE STATE, CUSTOMARY LAW AND CIVIL SOCIETY  
CAPITAL ROOM NORTH**

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**RETHINKING STATE-SOCIETAL RELATIONS IN MYANMAR: IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRENT  
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS  
ROGER LEE HUANG**

The Myanmar military has long been successful in asserting its dominance over society without having to cave in to political demands by non-state actors. In 2011 however, the military regime which had survived a series of critical challenges to its rule chose to dissolve itself despite the absence of any realistic political contender that could force regime change. The nominally civilian government has since introduced reforms that allow greater pluralism in Myanmar. This paper will offer a historical understanding of the development of the Myanmar state since the collapse of the Socialist government in 1988 to explain why current reforms are taking place. By focusing on the evolution of state-societal relations, this paper will argue that the military junta, which came into power in 1988, has re-designed and sought alliances with various societal forces to placate mass frustrations and public resentments in order to ensure the survival of the military

as the primary political actor in Myanmar. Through these shifting alliances and cooperation between the various state and societal actors, the Myanmar state that had earlier allowed the re-emergence of civil society for instrumental purposes has effectively been influenced by the demands of these non-state actors. Though the military have created “reserve domains” to protect the institutional interests of the military in any future governments, with expanded interaction between state and societal actors, the line distinguishing state and society has nevertheless blurred and civil society can potentially play a critical role in pushing for further liberalization in Myanmar.

**DEVELOPMENTS IN REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY FOR BURMESE CIVIL SOCIETY**  
**MAAIKE MATELSKI**

A range of recent developments in Myanmar have led to a reshuffling and diversification of spokespersons from Burmese civil society. As political space seems to be opening up, local representatives have taken the opportunity to raise issues that were long considered too sensitive. Increased interaction between civil society and politics is likely to occur, as political representatives are gaining public legitimacy, while domestic civil society is increasingly being acknowledged politically for its vital role in the country’s future. Given these developments, civil society agendas and advocacy points are likely to be subject to discussion, and to take new directions. While there is a potential for more voices to be heard, there is an equal risk that local decision making and representation will remain in the hands of established elites, leaving traditionally marginalized groups out of sight. Meanwhile, international perceptions of Myanmar are also changing, as western diplomats, journalists and donor organisations are increasingly finding their way into the country. While civil society organisations in exile are still well positioned to bring up and distribute advocacy points, the reality of shifting donor interests, and a number of exile organisations moving inside the country, will likely compel them to re-assess their roles. This paper will discuss how recent developments in Myanmar are influencing issues of representation, advocacy, and agenda setting for Burmese civil society. Findings presented are based on fieldwork and interviews with Burmese civil society representatives between 2010 and 2012.

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**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5**  
**PANEL SEVEN: COLLECTIONS AND CURATORS:**  
**DISPLAY OF BURMESE ARTS AND CURATORIAL PRACTICES**  
**CAPITAL ROOM SOUTH**

**CATHERINE RAYMOND, DISCUSSANT**

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**COLLECTING BURMESE ART AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM**  
**ALEXANDRA GREEN**

Today, the British Museum holds over three thousand objects from Burma in its collections. Compared with the approximately fifty thousand pieces from India, this seems to be relatively limited in scale and is probably a result of a number of factors, prominent among which are the

date when colonial control was assumed by the British and the extent of archaeological activity carried out by them in Burma. Most of the Burmese items at the British Museum arrived into the collections during the twentieth century, with only around 300 acquired in the nineteenth century. The range of the collection is extensive and not confined to works of art, with such objects as arrows, adzes, banknotes, coins, spindles, and spears found in significant numbers. This is in keeping with the British Museum's emphasis upon its role as a museum of civilization rather than of art. Lacquerware, sculpture, and numerous textiles from the Burma hills comprise the majority of the Burmese Buddhist collection, however. This paper explores the formation of the Burmese collection at the British Museum, focusing on the relationships between collectors, collecting time frames, and the types of objects gathered.

**PALM OR PAPER? SOME THOUGHTS ON BOOK ART PRACTICES IN BURMA AND CEYLON**  
**SHERRY HARLACHER**

This paper contributes to an emergent discourse that deconstructs the monolithic category known as "Theravada." Cultural ties between the island of Sri Lanka (formerly known as Ceylon) and Burma date back to at least the tenth century and grew out of a rich tradition of Buddhist scholarship and mutual patronage. During the nineteenth century, caste divisions in Sinhala society spurred the transmission of the Amarapura and Ramanna ordination lineages from Burma to Ceylon extending access to higher ordination beyond the elite landowning Goyigama caste. Although early modern Sinhala and Burmese communities shared a worldview shaped by the Pali canon and related textual and ritual preferences, a closer examination of their respective book art practices promises a more sophisticated appreciation of local values, preferences, and attitudes towards the Buddha's dhamma legacy. Art historical analyses that account for the presence of imagery in some, but not all, sacred books falls into several categories each located within a universal Buddhist economy of merit-making. These categories include ornamentation, illustration to promote religious instruction, and signifying Buddhist presence. With regards to similarities in subject matter and narrative modes, comparisons between Buddhist book art and temple mural painting have also yielded important insights. Recent analyses conducted by this investigator regarding book art practices in Ceylon, however, have revealed how infrequently images were deployed as illustrations, but rather endowed certain books with a form of material agency. Whether or not similar attitudes characterize book art practices in Burma and Thailand remains unclear. Beginning with a basic examination of materials and subject matter, important differences emerge. A strict preference in Ceylon for a small number of Buddhist birth legends is contrasted with a Burmese preference for the last ten birth stories preserved in the Mahanipata. The accordion-folded format of the paper parabaik popular in Burma and Thailand is altogether absent in Ceylon where narrative imagery is reserved most often for the inner surface of wooden binding boards and even more rarely incised directly on the palm leaf. The difference in media also shapes particular narrative modes and styles of representation. This preliminary exploration, therefore, recommends the potential for a codicological approach to Buddhist book art practices across the region; a method that explores the various relationships between materials, manufacturing techniques, literature, and larger textual communities.

**BURMESE ART IN THE WALTERS ART MUSEUM**  
**REBECCA HALL**

The Southeast Asian collection of the Walters Museum of Art has works of art from Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, and Burma. Art from Thailand constitutes the majority of the collection, and has garnered the most attention in publications and exhibitions. The museum's Burmese collection, while much smaller in number, contains a variety of objects from Buddha images to manuscripts to lacquered chests. Most of the collection comes from collectors whose primary affiliation was Thailand, specifically Doris Duke, Alexander Griswold, Henry Ginsburg, and James Bogle, and it is my understanding that the art was purchased in Thailand, not Burma. In this presentation I will introduce the Burmese art in the Walters Art Museum's collection, discussing the art objects together with my knowledge of their collection and eventual donation to the Walters. I ask: what, if anything, can we learn about the fact that most of this Burmese art was likely purchased in Thailand, specifically Bangkok?

**DANA: BURMESE ART OF DONATION**  
**CELINA CODEREY**

The subject of my presentation is the role played by Dana, donation, in Burmese Buddhist art and culture. I will particularly focus on the devotional relationships laymen have with the three jewels, i.e. the Buddha, the Dhamma, his teaching and the Sangha, the monks. The choice of this theme relies on two facts. First, most objects of Burmese art, including those of the private collection that I am studying, pertain to donations. Some are objects of donations (Buddha images, manuscripts chests, trays) others are used for donating something (hsun ok, hsun it, offering vessels, betel boxes, and cheroot boxes, etc.); others are the recipients of donation (Buddha's and nat images). Second, donation is the core of Burmese social, cultural and religious life. It's a model of values. This is perceptible to any tourists visiting the country that is immediately struck by the charity, generosity of these people. Visiting a house, the host is immediately offered lahpet or betel, fruits and green tea, everybody is ready to help assist you, walking on sandy beaches easy to meet children with hands full of shells, and surprisingly they don't want to sell but just offer them to the new comer. The most visible outcome of this generosity is the fact that Burma is the country who has the highest number of pagodas, spread all over its territory and is thus called the land of thousand pagodas or golden land. If these expressions of donations and their visible outcomes are accessible to everybody visiting the country, the multiple expressions of donation, their deepest reasons and various meanings and functions, its ins and outs can only be disclosed through a study of this phenomenon and the objects allowing it. Nevertheless in my opinion the main and deepest aspect of donation the common denominator of any kind of donation is that it contributes to maintain and renew the cosmic harmony – between the social, the natural and supernatural spheres – on which relies both the individual and the social life. From this harmony depend the succession of seasons, regularity and abundance of rain, the availability of raw material and particularly food, and, especially the individual and social well-being, which in the Burmese point of view consist not only in an healthy and wealthy life free from sufferings but also, according to Buddhist philosophy, in the individual and collective spiritual and karmic progression. Donation thus represents the key to understand Burmese society. Works of art, with their material and symbolic dimension allow, support, convey, and express this donation. By studying Burmese works of art,

we appreciate and understand the core, essence of Burmese society, culture and religion. But the objects themselves are not simply instrument of this cultural study; they themselves are meaningful: their material, form, ornaments, decoration not only express their artistic and aesthetic dimension but also say a lot about their meaning and function and thus about Burmese society. They are part of a whole.

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**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5**  
**PANEL EIGHT: EDUCATION, PAST AND PRESENT**  
**SANDBURG AUDITORIUM**

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**IMPERIAL EDUCATION POLICIES IN BURMA**  
**KIM JOHNSON**

Imperialism is driven by ideology and economics, and it operates with centralized state control and the notion of “projects of power” justified with morality (e.g. “save the savage”). The goal of imperialism is not to establish a new state but rather to increase the power and influence of the mother state. Colonialist education policies were created specifically to mould the dominated state into the dominating state’s vision for the intermediate and long-term future of its subjects. In turn, the implementation of these policies has lasting effects on the expression and understanding of nationalism, historicism, and identity of the formerly-colonized people.

This paper will examine the role of education policies created by the British and implemented the pongyi, local lay people, and western missionaries in moulding the relationship between the ethnic minorities and the ethnic majority in Burma. Primary sources, including British and Indian governmental documents, missionary newsletters, and memoirs and journals of British officials and missionaries stationed in Burma serve as the data sources. Section I will discuss the British colonization of Burma in terms of educational policies from 1862-1945. Section II will discuss the role of missionaries from various western countries in reproducing a western paradigm and social structure. Section III will examine the intersection of geopolitical borders and ethnic boundaries in the context of the Thailand-Burma border.

**THE TENSION BETWEEN ACING THE MATRIC AND LEARNING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS**  
**DOROTHY GUYOT**

In Myanmar the goal of fifteen year old students and their families is to excel on the matriculation examination, but a key goal of the ASEAN University Network is to develop critical thinking. What intellectual and personal strengths grow in preparing for the Matric? Among top Matric scorers, what critical and creative thinking skills and personal values require augmenting to meet ASEAN goals? What are modes of developing them?

The children of professionals prepare for six days in national examination matric though at least a year of intensive study. A family of means will spend \$5,000 for individual and group tutoring in six subjects, Myanmar language, English, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology. High matric scorers are at the ASEAN level in their knowledge of mathematics and physics, but lack

knowledge of biochemistry. Diligence becomes ingrained during the preparatory year, from mixed impetus including personal ambition, peer pressure, family rewards, and hectoring. The individuals propelled by personal ambition have mastered priority setting and time management. Some few have also discovered joy in the hard work of learning.

The curriculum framework that the Guyots and Dr. Khin Maung Win designed with the assistance of John Badgley and U Ba Win has advanced students toward ASEAN intellectual and personal goals during ten years of experience by the Pre-Collegiate Program of The Diplomatic School, Yangon.

**BURMESE MONASTIC EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXTS OF  
BURMA: CURRICULA, MOTIVATIONS AND ROLES OF MONASTIC EXAMINATIONS  
PYI PHYO KYAW**

This paper will examine roles of monastic education in sociopolitical contexts of contemporary Burma, exploring the ways in which formal monastic examinations are used in attempts to create a notional ‘unified Theravāda Burmese Buddhism’. In particular, I shall assess the roles of national Pahtamapyan examinations, which are sponsored by the state and recognized nationally, in an ongoing process of building an image of ‘unified Theravāda Buddhism’ in contemporary Burma. Along the way, I shall highlight different types of formal monastic examinations held by non-governmental Buddhist associations across the country and their curricula, and motivations for entering formal examinations from the perspective of Burmese monastics, i.e. both monks and nuns, using socio-anthropological methods.

Scholars writing on a history of monastic education in pre-colonial and colonial Burma, Dhammasāmi, Schober and Charney for example, have focused on debates between secularization and non-secularization of monastic education, and competition over which groups - different monastic lineages, kings, and lay literati - have authority in relation to Buddhist learning. This paper will augment the existing western scholarship on monastic education in Burma by studying broader curricula of different monastic examinations in contemporary Burma. In so doing, we will see, on the one hand, promotion of national Pahtamapyan examinations by the state means other types monastic examinations are marginalized to an extent. On the other hand, we can still observe diversity in presence of non-governmental monastic examinations. Such diversity suggests that creation of an image of ‘unified Burmese Theravāda Buddhism’ is an ongoing process which exists only notionally.

**THE ASIATIC MODE OF COLLEGE ADMISSION: A BURMA CASE  
JAMES F. GUYOT**

The Pre-Collegiate Program in Yangon ([www.precollegiate.org](http://www.precollegiate.org)) is fielding its tenth wave of young Myanmar citizens to go abroad for their undergraduate education at liberal arts colleges. The Program's decade of experience probes answers to the following question: Given the special burden that Asian-American applicants to colleges bear, how can Burmese who have little financial backing win admission to those highly selective colleges which are old enough to be rich enough to provide "full-ride" financing for four years (especially in today's tough times for financial aid).

**EATING AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE BURMESE SELF: AN EXAMINATION OF BURMESE CHILDREN'S EMBODIED MEALTIME PRACTICES AND HOW THEY SHAPE THEIR SENSE OF INDEPENDENCE, AGENCY, AND INTIMACY**  
**SEINENU M. THEIN**

Eating lies at the intersection of culture, mind, and biology. On the one hand, eating is a universal task that is linked to an evolutionarily adapted biological system, yet eating is also a daily cultural practice that is laden with both implicit and explicit meaning. Eating, as a daily practice, and the family “mealtime,” as a distinct “activity setting,” contains a rich repertoire of embodied behavior from which children can glean a variety of social information.

We contrast the embodied eating practices of 54 children in Burma and the United States. The results of the study indicate that there are significant cultural differences in eating practices across three variables: 1.) Independence, 2.) Agency, and 3.) Intimacy. Moreover, we find that cultural differences emerge early and are sustained across a significant span of development.

The author discusses the findings in light of how ‘habitus’ and daily practice with regard to food and eating can contribute to cultural differences in development of the self. We also highlight the variability in the Burmese sample and discuss this variability in light of the social and economic changes that are currently taking place in Burma. In particular, we discuss how socio-demographic changes can impact day-to-day caretaking practices and parental values, altering children’s developmental trajectories with regard to the self.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL NINE: THE IRONY OF ENDURANCE: SHIFTING CONCEPTION OF THE SASANA IN BURMESE BUDDHISM**  
**REGENCY ROOM**

**ORGANIZER: THOMAS PATTON**

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Panel Abstract

Starting from an interest in the history of ideas in Burma and how definitions of Buddhist categories shift over time and why, this panel examines changing conceptions of the Buddhist category of “sāsana” (the teachings of the Buddha and the institutions and practices that support them). The category has undergone varied inflections even as it maintains a paradoxical emphasis on continuity and impermanence. The category of the sāsana has been ubiquitous in Burmese religious discourse but not stable in meaning. It has meant different things to different people, and even different things to the same person or group depending on context. To illustrate this fruitful tension between endurance and change, the four panelists explore how images and understandings of sāsana protection and propagation have changed and flowed from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards for purposes of adapting to new problems and social technologies, but also highlight the Burmese Buddhist trope of enduring truths and traditions that has shaped and

constrained innovation. Pranke's paper shows how an important monastic chronicle, Thathana-linkara Sadan, altered the way a fundamental eschatological concern of the sāsana was understood and how this change went on to affect later manifestations of Burmese Buddhist history and practice. Focusing on the Fifth Buddhist Council, Braun's paper argues that a rhetorical shift in the council's ostensible purpose toward a concern for textual purity had unintended consequences for how the sāsana was viewed in the years leading up to the Sixth Buddhist Council. Turner explores how the moral reform efforts of Buddhist lay associations in the colonial period came to redefine the location and center of gravity of the sāsana and the types of ethical action required for its preservation. Patton examines how Burmese concerns regarding the sāsana that were examined in the previous three papers have influenced contemporary Buddhist sorcerer-saint devotees' conceptions of the sāsana and, consequently, how these devotees understand themselves to be the guardians and propagators of this sāsana.

**BUDDHIST "SALVATION ARMIES" AND THE VANGUARDS OF THE SĀSANA  
THOMAS PATTON**

Outside of issues involving healing the sick and protecting humanity, weizzā (Buddhist sorcerer saint) devotees are most concerned with ensuring that the Buddha sāsana continues to thrive in Myanmar, and ideally, throughout the world. This paper will look at how devotees believe the weizzā to be working in the world and through the lives of devotees to help guard and propagate the sāsana. In addition to addressing such questions as, "Why do they think the sāsana needs this extra protection?" and "Is it 'just' a matter of standard Buddhist decline theory, or do they indicate, directly or indirectly, that additional, context-specific threats to the sāsana require their intervention?", I will examine the ways weizzā mediums and devotees understand themselves to be protecting and propagating the sāsana through various means provided to them by weizzā through dreams, meditative visions, and periods of possession.

**STONE BEFORE SPEECH: MINDON'S FIFTH BUDDHIST COUNCIL  
ERIK BRAUN**

The Fifth Buddhist Council (saṅgāyanā), sponsored by King Mindon, took place from April 15<sup>th</sup> to September 12<sup>th</sup>, 1871. The ostensible goal of the council was to safeguard Buddhism through the purification and preservation of the Buddhist scriptures (the tipīṭaka). Yet, the 2,400 monks who assembled in the royal palace for the council only met several years after Mindon had ordered the scriptures, just confirmed in their purity, to be incised on 729 stone slabs and installed at the Kuthowdaw Pagoda in Mandalay. This order of events—first stone, then speech—suggests that the purpose of the council was not strictly a concern about textual accuracy. In fact, it seems likely that the original goals were the ritualized unification of the sangha through communal recitation, as in earlier medieval-era councils, and the generation of merit. The refusal of some monastic factions (notably, the Shwegyin) to participate, however, shifted the rhetorical emphasis toward the ideal of pristine textual preservation. This change in the meaning of the council calls our attention to the context in which it took place and to the historical memory of earlier councils that framed the possibilities for change. In light of these considerations, the presentation will consider the ramifications of the Fifth Council's textualist shift for ongoing developments in conceptions of the sāsana (Buddhist teachings and

institutions), revealed especially in its effects on the Sixth Council, which occurred in the mid-1950s.

## **HISTORY AND ESCHATOLOGY IN BURMESE BUDDHIST CHRONICLES**

**PATRICK PRANKE**

Burmese chronicles make frequent reference to the Buddha's 5000-year *sāsana* and celebrate acts-of-merit performed for its preservation by the pious. Equally common are references to persons dedicating their merit in hopes of attaining liberation at the time of the future Buddha, Metteyya, millions of years from now. Informing both goals is the belief that liberation is not possible today because the current *sāsana* is too declined, and hence one must wait till the founding of the next *sāsana* by Metteyya Buddha to have that chance. This, we know, is based on an eschatology articulated in the Pāli commentaries and in later works such as the *Anāgatavaṃsa*. It is attested at Pagan, and was well known by the 16th century when the first Burmese chronicles were written. From that time until the early 19th century, this view was taken for granted in Burmese chronicle writing—mentioned always in passing because it was always assumed. This stance was changed in 1831 with the writing of a monastic chronicle named *Thathana-linkara Sadan*. In that work, the 5000-year *sāsana* theory is examined and “corrected” in light of the commentaries, and readers are admonished not to believe that liberation is impossible today. Subsequent monastic chronicles written in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have all followed the lead of the *Thathana-linkara Sadan*. In this paper I will examine the argument put forth in that influential work and discuss the impact it has had on the Burmese writing of Buddhist history, and the Burmese practice of Buddhism, over the course of the last two centuries.

## **DYNAMIC ORTHODOXIES AND SHIFTING SĀSANA: COLONIAL INTERPRETATIONS OF BUDDHIST REFORM**

**ALICIA TURNER**

The claim to purify and preserve the Buddha's *sāsana* has been the standard motivation behind Buddhist reform movements since the Pagan era. Reformers stake a claim to preserve the Buddha's singular and unchanging dispensation and to return monks and lay people to previous correct moral action. Despite the conservative nature of these claims however, each instance of reform enacts innovations in Burmese Buddhism, creating new lineages, new moral regimes and new textual genres and emphases. The need to resist the decline of the *sāsana* provided a reason to intervene—a powerful means for innovation in Burmese history. In this, reform to preserve the *sāsana* became an engine of change, a technique of living and continually redefined orthodoxies. Historically with each of these reforms the understanding of *sāsana* itself has shifted slightly, taking on different emphases and inflections to reflect the Burmese concerns of the day. This paper will explore the shifting understandings of *sāsana* in the reforms carried out by Buddhist lay associations at the turn of the twentieth century. It will examine how, building on the language and modes of previous royal *sāsana* reforms, they offered new interpretations of the location and essential points of articulation of the *sāsana* to respond to their contemporary situation.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL TEN: COLONIAL AND POST-COLONIAL SUBJECTIVITIES**  
**CAPITAL ROOM NORTH**  
**ORGANIZER, ROSALIE METRO**

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Panel Abstract

The papers in this panel analyze current political and social dynamics in and around Burma with a consciousness of the ways in which the legacy of British colonization has affected relationships among Burmese and non-Burmese, elite and subaltern, and exiled and domestic subjects. In this context, the authors ask who speaks for whom, how various groups are represented and represent themselves, and on what bases authenticity is alleged.

**ENGLISH IN BURMA AS AN INTELLECTUAL INHERITANCE**  
**PATRICK MCCORMICK**

Little scholarly attention has been paid to English as a linguistic and intellectual legacy of British colonialism in Burma. English and outside learning coming through the medium of English play a profound role in the media, government, education and intellectual discourse, even religion. Yet in contrast to India or Malaysia, two other post-colonial societies, Burma stands out in that after the demise of English-medium education in the 1960s, the number of fluent English-speaking elites declined. Rather, post-colonial generations tend to be familiar with English learned from older generations, but generally lack advanced-level skills. A striking feature of English in Burma is that code-switching into full English is uncommon. Rather, speakers mix English into Burmese as a way to demonstrate their learning and educational status, because code-mixing can add prestige and legitimacy to what they say. Speakers do not have the comprehension of their listeners or readers as their primary goal: this may reflect an attitude that just being exposed to English is in itself beneficial. Furthermore, in many contexts, verbal communication will be in Burmese but written communication will be in English only; indeed, the use of written Burmese in many contexts is inappropriate.

I explore some of the consequences of this disjuncture between ability of speakers and centrality to intellectual discourse. English has taken on many of the roles of Pāli as the language of outside, prestigious, supra-local knowledge. More centrally, Burmese speakers use English terms and English learning to explain, understand, and analyze their own society and traditions, so that English and its associated terms became a frame through which to view and interpret the local.

**POST-COLONIAL SUBJECTIVITIES IN THE POST-CONFLICT AID TRIANGLE: THE DRAMA OF**  
**EDUCATIONAL MISSIONIZATION IN THE THAI-BURMA BORDERLANDS**  
**ROSALIE METRO**

This paper focuses on the educational situation for Burmese people who occupy the geographical, ideological, and political borderlands that connect Thailand and Burma. A range of

state and non-state actors have become involved in this situation over the years: the former Burmese military regime (the State Peace and Development Council, or SPDC), the Royal Thai Government (RTG), the United Nations (UN), Burmese ethnic minority and pro-democracy armed struggle groups, International and Local Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs, LNGOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). I describe these borderlands as a “post-conflict” setting, using Mark Duffield’s (2001) idea of the post-Cold War “merging of development with security,” alongside Homi Bhabha’s (1994) account of colonial discourses on education to argue that the interventions of international actors in the education of Burmese migrants and refugees constitute a process of neo-colonial “missionization” in which ideas about schooling are negotiated and hybrid subjectivities particular to post-colonial settings emerge. My conclusions are based on seven months of ethnographic fieldwork in Thailand in 2009-2011.

**BURMESE REFUGEE REPATRIATION IN COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**  
**THOMAS RHODEN**

This paper argues for a systematic examination of conditions that form the type of refugee repatriation across four countries in mainland Southeast Asia: Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Myanmar. Refugee repatriation type varies between forced repatriation and voluntary repatriation, the main indicators of which are actualized respectively through coercion and incentivization. In combination, three structural conditions are emphasized as affecting repatriation type: (1) the nature of the regime of repatriation; (2) the level of violent conflict within the repatriating state; and (3) the intergovernmental institutions and agreements between nations of first asylum and nations of repatriation. If past individual case studies have focused attention on a catalogue of facts that accumulate in any single effort of repatriation of refugee populations and, typically, have privileged a descriptive voluntarism emphasizing the role of human rights (or lack thereof), the broad patterns sketched here underscore instead the importance of examining underlying conditions and institutional forces of refugee repatriation within a structured comparative analytical framework. For Southeast Asia in the modern era, these three structural conditions will provide the explanatory power for understanding what a variation in refugee repatriation across past cases in Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia might portend for Myanmar in the coming years.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL ELEVEN: DISCOURSE OF CRIME, LAW AND CULTURE IN COLONIAL BURMA**  
**CAPITAL ROOM SOUTH**

**ORGANIZER: MAITRII AUNG-THWIN**

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Panel Abstract

Studies of crime and criminalization have contributed to our understanding of the colonial encounter in Asia. Within South and Southeast Asia, research that has focused on broad topics such as the penetration of the capitalist economy, the expansion of states, the localization of new technologies, and the interaction of communities have been enhanced through studies of

smuggling, banditry, piracy, prostitution, gambling, sedition, and revolt. Early scholarship focused on the socio-economic contexts that produced forms of criminality while later area-studies scholars treated depictions of crime (often found in colonial documents) as a discourse that obfuscated more authentic features of an autonomous Southeast Asian culture.

The application of theories concerning governmentality, Orientalism, and the production of knowledge to the study of colonial crime has raised new questions about its relationship to culture. This panel considers way in which the category of crime produced and was produced by understandings of Burmese culture and society. In doing so, the panel explores how discourses of crime within short stories, trial documents, and government reports constructed particular images of Burmese society in the 1930s. Individually, the presentations examine notions of Burmese “lawlessness”, “rebellion”, and “unrest”. Taken together, the papers consider how criminal discourses came to represent the underlying social tensions between immigrant and local communities in British Burma.

**IMPERIAL INTERTEXTUALITY AND THE MAKING OF A BURMESE/BENGALI CRIMINAL: SAYA  
SAN’S CONNECTION TO THE CHITTAGONG ARMOURY RAID CASE OF 1930  
MAITRII AUNG-THWIN**

On the night of the 18<sup>th</sup> April 1930, a group of men launched an attack on a British Armoury in Chittagong (Bengal), destroying railway facilities and communication lines in their attempt to initiate an uprising against the British authorities in Bengal. Although the initial outbreak was eventually quelled, the leader---one Surya Sen---managed to elude a force of several thousand soldiers and escape from his mountain headquarters. For the next three years, Surya Sen continued to dictate a campaign of armed rebellion throughout the Chittagong region until he was eventually arrested, tried, and sentenced for execution by a Special Tribunal in 1933.

On the night of 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1930, a Burmese peasant activist by the name of Saya San reportedly declared himself king, erected a mountain palace, and led an armed uprising throughout the paddy fields of Lower Burma. Peasant cultivators were allegedly attracted to his anti-tax rhetoric, Buddhist priorities, and powerful charisma. The Burma Rebellion would also last through 1933, despite Saya San’s arrest, trial, and execution in 1931.

Individually, the two resistance movements have been assessed within the separate contexts of mainstream nationalist movements in British India and British Burma. Read together, a comparison of the official documents reveals a previously undetected epistemological connection between the two movements. By reconstructing the links between the trials of Surya Sen and Saya San, this paper demonstrates the manner in which each event legally and textually constituted the other, providing a broader context within which the two uprisings might be understood.

**CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN COLONIAL BURMA: POLICING THE PLURAL SOCIETY  
HAYDON CHERRY**

In 1932, Shwe U Daung killed off his most famous fictional creation, Maung San Shar, a Burmese consulting detective in turban and longyi. The death occurred in the short story,

“Maung San Shar Caught by the Villain’s Hand,” published in Kawi Dagon magazine. According to Thein Maung, the narrator of the story and a medical doctor, Maung San Shar slipped over a waterfall in Shan State with his nemesis, the evil criminal mastermind Professor Tun Pe. Before meeting his end, Maung San Shar had battled criminals for years in Shwe U Daung’s tales of the Burmese underworld. The Maung San Shar stories, published in Burmese periodicals and soon anthologized, were among the most widely-read works of Burmese fiction during the colonial period. But crime was as much a problem on the streets of Rangoon as it was on the pages of Shwe U Daung. According to J.S. Furnivall, growth of crime was one of the “outstanding characters of modern Burma.” Between 1911 and 1921, the population of Burma increased by nine percent. But during the same period, the murder rate increased by thirty-one percent, and robbery and dacoity grew by 109 percent. This paper places the popularity of the Maung San Shar stories against the backdrop of the increase in crime in Burma between the two world wars. It draws on the 1923 Report of the Crime Enquiry Committee as well as the annual Report on the Administration of Criminal Justice in Burma, among other official sources. The paper examines how the colonial government policed Burma’s increasingly lawless “plural society,” as well as the relevance of that concept for understanding the growth of crime during the colonial period.

**MIXED MARRIAGE, ZERBADIS, AND BUDDHISM: ANATOMY OF URBAN UNREST IN LATE  
COLONIAL BURMA  
LALITA HINGKANONTA**

This paper examines urban disturbances including riots and protests that took place in late colonial Burma. Unlike popular unrest in India and elsewhere in the Empire which was by and large provoked by economic hardship, most of the disturbances in Burma stemmed from larger cultural and religious dimensions. Racial conflict between Burmese and Indian communities culminated in communal riots throughout the first few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With growing nationalistic sentiment against colonial rule and, generally, alien exploitation of Burma, antagonisms constantly grew mainly in Rangoon. Mass agitation, some led by monks, resulted in communal skirmishes and strikes but the largest series of riots in 1938 was in fact caused by a much more complex problem of what the Burman public believed as religious and cultural encroachment, generally known as ‘the Indian Question’ – a combined dissent of mixed marriage (between Indian men and Burmese women) and the fruits of such marriage known as Zerbadis. This paper attempts to examine the labyrinth of inter-racial conflict that haunted Burma in the decades prior to independence.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL TWELVE: MIGRATION AND BURMESE COMMUNITIES IN THE DIASPORA**  
**SANDBURG AUDITORIUM**

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**SOCIAL HIERARCHY, AUTHENTICITY AND TIME: STUDENT PERFORMANCES BY MIGRANT  
CHILDREN ON WORLD TEACHER'S DAY**  
**INGA GRUSS**

Hundreds of thousands of migrants from Myanmar live in Thailand. Around this community, a sizeable NGO industry has developed over the last two decades. Their work is founded upon the premise to know what migrants' needs and wants are and most of these organizations lay claims speaking on behalf of and representing migrants' interests, struggles and lives. Public (re-)presentation, however, is a contentious issue, in particular for migrant communities who need to learn different ways of being in the public sphere of a foreign country. When NGOs reach out to a public, which images are created of and projected upon a diverse migrant population? Which essentialized notions of identities are evoked? Which tools are used to communicate these projections? Whose interests are served? I explore these questions through analysis of student performances by migrant workers' children on World Teachers Day in Phang Nga province. I suggest that student performances serve to strengthen relations between the organizing NGO and a Thai state and public by performing obedience and locating students' lives in the past. The performances are a learning moment for students and the audience alike. Students are instructed in the importance of social hierarchies and they learn about authentic ways of being from Myanmar. The audience consisting of parents, Thai government officials, Thai and Myanmar NGO workers, witness a pristine performance in which the present that people live in is oddly absent and that bears no relationship to migrants' lives.

**THE PULPIT CHRONICLE: A STUDY OF HOW BURMESE-CHIN IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED  
STATES NEGOTIATE THEIR ETHNIC IDENTITY THROUGH CHRISTIANITY**  
**LIAN THANG**

On the first week of July 2012 from 6-8, a gathering of Chin people, an ethnic group from Burma, will be held in the Southside of Indianapolis. While the term "Chin" constitutes a particular ethnic group that is distinct from the others, Chin people have various subgroups and dialects within the umbrella term of "Chin." Hence, there is no such thing as universal "Chin" language. Instead, the majority of Chin people are united by one entity—Christianity. In this context of this gathering, being an immigrant is another shared identity. Oppressed for their religious affiliations and political indifference to the military junta, many Chins have sought better lives all over the world—the United States being one of the leading destination. Like many immigrants that came before them, Chin people, who are in the United States, are at the crossroad. On the one hand, they have been freed from prosecutions, but at the same time, it has threatened the identity of Chin people as many have anxiety about the process of "Americanization." Of course, the recent political developments in Burma have weighted heavily on the psyche of Chin people. The upcoming gathering in Indianapolis will be a microcosm of

how Chin people negotiate and navigate through these discourses. In my paper, I will examine how these issues are publicly articulated at this gathering. My analysis will focus on how the gathering function as a site in which expressions of Chin identity are constructed, displayed, and possibly contested.

**CONSTRUCTING PAN-KAREN IDENTITY IN FORT WAYNE, INDIANA**  
**HEATHER MACLACHLAN**

Approximately 1000 self-identified Karen people live in Fort Wayne, Indiana; most of them are refugees from Burma who arrived after 2006. The most significant division in the Karen community, according to community members themselves, is the difference between Buddhists and Christians. Karen leaders (that is, the elected members of the Fort Wayne Karen Association) are working hard to build a unified pan-Karen community. The notion of pan-Karen identity is not new – numerous scholars have mentioned movements aimed at creating it – but this presentation will be the first explanation of how such an identity is discursively constructed in the diaspora. I will describe the annual “traditional” wrist-tying ceremony in Fort Wayne, and explain how Karen leaders talk about the history and context of this ritual in order to reframe it as an event which brings Karen people of all faiths and languages together. Also, I will explain how this case study furthers an important new theory of collective identity construction advanced by Gerd Baumann and Andre Gingrich (2004). Baumann and Gingrich claim that when groups use a “grammar of encompassment” to articulate their identity vis a vis an Other, the Other being encompassed will frequently contest the discourse. In Fort Wayne, it is the encompassers (that is, the Christians who have greater economic and political power) who are the most deeply troubled by the discourse of encompassment surrounding the wrist-tying ceremony. My conclusions are based on several months of fieldwork conducted in Fort Wayne in 2010 and 2011.

**BACK FROM GOLDEN LAND: EXPLORING MIGRATION PATTERNS, RESETTLEMENT AND  
POLITICAL MOBILIZATION OF BURMESE INDIAN REPATRIATES IN EASTERN INDIA SINCE THE  
1960S**

**RENAUD EGRETEAU**

This paper focuses on the Indian communities that migrated from British India into Burma during the colonial era and early postcolonial years, but were from the early 1960s forced to repatriate back to India. Drawing on recent fieldwork conducted among communities of Burmese Indian returnees in Eastern India, this paper explores their repatriation trajectories to places they were not familiar with, as well as their experiences of resettlement in their new “Indian” environment. It also attempts to trace the diasporic linkages they have maintained (or not, and why) with Burma today, years, if not decades, after their return migration. In doing so, it seeks to evaluate their contemporary influence on both their former host land and homeland. It will lastly examine their strategies of political mobilization at both the local (India) and transnational (Burma) levels. The research proposes to focus on two specific case studies in India and comparatively analyze them: the cities of Calcutta (Kolkata) in West Bengal and Madras (Chennai) in Tamil Nadu. Both sites indeed witnessed a significant number of Burmese Indian repatriates building up various community-based urban settlements and socio-economic or

political networks from the late 1960s: the Bengalis in various “Burma Colonies” around Calcutta, and the Tamils in the renowned “Burma Bazaar” of Madras.

**CONTENDING APPROACHES TO REFUGEE SERVICES**  
**REY TY AND MARIA BELTRAN-FIGUEROA**

There are problems in refugee services. Well-intentioned refugee service providers offer services which are inappropriate to the refugees’ needs. Refugees are treated as outsiders who lack knowledge, skills, and values to be useful members of the new society where they live, as a consequence of which they become estranged in the host country. Hence, alternative interventions are needed for refugee empowerment. This paper discusses the different ways by which refugee services are provided to Karen refugees in Indiana. The first model is the traditional one, in which the omniscient cultural outsiders provide for all the basic needs of the refugees. Deconstructing the dominant approach, the alternative post-structuralist model uses a human rights-based and culturally sensitive approach to refugee work. Using the case study research design, this paper selects a farm project and a weaving project, both of which are in Indianapolis. Data collection was based upon site visits, participant observation, community dialogue, and document analysis. Maria Beltran-Figueroa is the executive director of Refugee Resource and Research Institute based in Indianapolis, Indiana. Rey Ty is the Training Coordinator of the International Training Office of Northern Illinois University who brings participants of international programs to field visits, including the Karen refugees in Indianapolis. The findings reveal that, on the one hand, the first model promotes a hierarchical relation between the superior service providers and the inferior service recipients. On the other hand, the second approach promotes the economic, political, and cultural empowerment of the Karen refugees. Policy implications will be discussed.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL THIRTEEN: BUDDHISM’S VARIED MEANINGS IN RECENT MYANMAR HISTORY**  
**REGENCY ROOM**

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**THE MALALANKARAVATTHU IN CONTEXT**  
**CHARLES CARSTENS**

In the 1850s Bishop Paul Ambroise Bigandet and Reverend Chester Bennett produced translations of the Burmese vernacular text *Malālānkāravatthu* which may be translated as “The Collection [of Stories that is] like an Ornament of Garlands”. This text presents a biography of the bodhisattva’s final life as Siddhattha Gotama and his career as the Buddha. Scholars of Buddhist studies have recognized the translation of this text as one of the earliest Western attempts to explore Buddhism found in a vernacular medium, marking a critical juncture in the history of the Western study of Buddhism. This paper will examine how translations of the *Malālānkāravatthu* both generated responses to conceptions of Buddhism in the West and carried forth missionary interests in Burma. I will consider the legacy of these translations for the study of Buddhism in general and Burmese Buddhism in particular.

**BURMESE BUDDHISM AS SOCIAL IDEOLOGY**  
**WARD KEELER**

I propose to discuss Burmese Buddhism as a set of ideas about how best to enter into social relations with others. These ideas are not internally consistent. Nor are they consistently applied in people's relations with each other. The inconsistencies themselves tell us about conflicting attitudes toward what individuals seek to gain, both sociologically and affectively, from the bonds they have with others--and which some people try to modify through the practice of meditation.

**THERAVADA BUDDHISM INFLUENCE ON GENDER COMMUNICATION IN MYANMAR/BURMA**  
**HAN THINZAR (HONEY) ZAW**

This study investigates the gender communication which is influenced by Theravada Buddhism in Myanmar (Burma). A survey study of 28 Burmese and Buddhist students of 18-25 age groups and interview with seven Buddhist families are conducted. In this survey, gender communication includes communication between men and women and the communication between the society and the other genders.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL FOURTEEN: BURMA'S 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY HISTORY 1**  
**CAPITAL ROOM NORTH**

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**MARMA OF THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS AND HISTORICAL/ETHNIC RELATIONSHIP TO**  
**BURMA**  
**CHIPAMONG CHOWDHURY**

Mārmās is one of ethnic minorities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of the Southeastern Bangladesh. Their culture, language, religion, and social-mobility are completely different from Bengali people of Bangladesh. In her work, *The Marmas of Bangladesh* (1991), Selina Ahsan claims that the Mārmās of Bangladesh are none other than Burmese nationals. In relation to the Burmese ethnic identity, Ahsan also conclusively states that the Mārmā of the Chittagong Hill Tracts have historical and ethnic link to the Talain people of the Mons in Pegu. Among many, this paper raises some interrelated questions: How far Ahsan's statement contains historical precision to support her argument? Despite being Bangladeshi citizen, what makes the Mārmās to identify as Burmese nationals? What are the cultural and political advantages do they receive by claiming as Burmese nationality rather than Arakanese and Talain/Mons? How and when did the ancestral history of the Mārmā become an integral part of the Bohmongri's chronicle?

Based on the existing historiographical literatures of the Mārmā-history, written in Bengali vernacular, as well as my ethnographical study for the last 7 years, this paper reconstructs the origins of the Mārmās, its ethno-political relationship to Burma-historicity, and trans-Mārmās ethnic nationality from the cross and inter-historical perspective. This new study will contribute to the cross historiographical study of Burma and the relationship to the Burmese.

**LABOUR POLITICS UNDER THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (1962-1974)**  
**KYAW SOE LWIN**

After the coup in March, 1962, the Revolutionary Council (RC) abolished all the previous trade unions and constituted a new labour organization called Pyi-Thu-Ah-Lote-Tha-Mar-Kaung-Si (the People's Workers' Council), in an attempt to consolidate all workers under the leadership of the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP). The RC's plan was to unify all workers- both private and public sectors- and to put them all under one umbrella organization. For almost five years, the Revolutionary Council had pacified workers by organizing several workers' conferences, allowing workers to air their grievances, before the RC eventually established the People's Workers' Council. Moreover, in order to attract widespread support from working class, the Revolutionary Government had amended several Labour Acts in favor of workers since 1963. Despite the RC's attempts to promote the socio-economic status of the working class as a whole, many state workers became frustrated with the state organized labour union, which was found unable to resolve their grievances and satisfy their demands. So many state workers chose a different channel to voice their concerns. In May and June of 1974, the country suddenly saw a sudden wave of strikes originating from several state-owned factories and workplaces, located primarily in Yangon and Mandalay. The Revolutionary Government contained the labour unrest by using forces, resulting in several deaths and many injuries. What many state workers found ineffective became valuable to many workers employed in the private sector. Consequently, due to the favorable system, many private-sector workers took advantage of the current labour institutions. This paper will attempt to explain why the new labour institutions emerged under the Revolutionary Government, which were supportive to many private-sector workers, were found unconstructive to many state workers. In doing so, this paper will study how the state actors, employers and workers interacted with each other and how workers in general exploited the opportunities that emerged from these tripartite interactions.

**MYTKYIN 1942: SEVEN DAYS THAT SHOOK A WORLD**  
**MICHAEL D LEIGH**

In Ten Days that Shook the World John Reed described (albeit somewhat partially) a series of events that swept across Petrograd in October 1917. The episode led to the downfall of the Romanov dynasty and triggered a global tsunami. The eruptions caused by events in Myitkyin during the first week of May in 1942 registered lower on the political Richter-scale than those in Russia, but were no less significant. Within the context of Burma they triggered a similar tidal wave which led to the eventual collapse of colonial rule. There could be no come-back for the old order after the dramatic events that unfolded in Myitkyin. The story contains all the ingredients of historical fiction or a political whodunit. There was the nail-biting flight of a King (or in this case a Governor), his Lady and the Court; the desperate battle against both time and elements, as monsoon rains approached fast and a fearsome enemy appeared at the gates of the town. There was a caste of daring young men in flying machines, brave railway engineers and honorable civil servants. There was also a pathetic, and often heroic, chorus of terrified victims – local people, Chinese troops, mothers with young children, grandparents, the halt and maim, hangers-on and lots of poor wee orphans. But this was fact – and (as always) fact is stranger than

fiction. The paper describes the events, examines their significance and places them in the wider political context of Burma in the 1940s.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL FIFTEEN: POLITICAL ECONOMY AND FINANCE IN A MODERNIZING STATE**  
**REGENCY ROOM**

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**POLITICAL ECONOMY ANALYSIS OF EXCHANGE RATE POLICY REFORM IN MYANMAR**  
**KOJI KUBO**

The appreciation of the exchange rate has been one of the most critical economic policy issues in Myanmar; the value of the US dollar has diminished to a third in Myanmar in the last six years, which has imposed serious damage on the vulnerable exporting industries. The causes of the appreciation include foreign exchange revenues from buoyant resource exports, notably jade. On top of that, strict import restrictions curtail demand for foreign exchange, which has aggravated the appreciation. Relaxing import restrictions would be effective in alleviating the on-going appreciation.

Import restrictions were strengthened when Myanmar was short of foreign exchange in the late 1990. From the macroeconomic point of view, the buoyant resource exports improved the current account balance and made import restrictions superfluous. On the other hand, import restrictions per se produced those who have vested interest in them, especially the cronies to the ex-military government who used to have preferential allocation of import licenses. Therefore, reforms in the foreign exchange policy require a strong political will.

From the viewpoint of political economy, this paper evaluates the achievements of the reforms of the new government in the foreign exchange policy. While the government devaluated the official exchange rate to a level close to the parallel exchange rate in April 2012, this reform will be shown to be irrelevant to the alleviation of the appreciation. It is concluded that the new government is yet to raid the vested interest of the cronies.

**TAX REFORM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN BURMA (MYANMAR): THOU GOEST**  
**WHITHER?**  
**MIN YE PAING HEIN**

Under the aegis of Robert R. Nathan Associates, Robert Musgrave, one of the most world-renowned economists in all matters of taxation, published a treatise “Tax policy for Economic Development in Burma” in 1955. This tome offers a package of policy prescriptions for an effective reform of the Burmese tax system under U Nu’s government. Amidst the fortissimo of recent reforms in the economy such as the unification of the exchange rate and the farm-bill, the reform of the tax system has, once again, reclaimed its rightful place in the minds of multiple stake-holders in the reform process. This paper is an attempt to revisit the relevance and irrelevance of Musgrave’s policy prescriptions in the current macroeconomic climate of Myanmar. It will also speak to some of the major tax reforms that the current government has

undertaken in the recent years such as the termination of the brain drain taxation (migrant taxation) on public revenue. Finally, it will explore the major challenges that the government will face in reforming its tax policies given its current political, social and economic constraints.

**BANKS' LENDING DECISIONS TO FINANCE BUSINESSES IN THE FAÇADE OF CONVERGENT TO INSTITUTIONAL PRESSURES: A CASE OF MYANMAR (BURMA)**  
**SANDAR WIN**

This study examines the effectiveness of strict regulations on banks in order to maintain financial stability. In this paper, Myanmar banks have been chosen to study as the country itself has undergone financial crisis back in 2003. Afterwards, the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM), whose control power derived from the government, has tightened banking regulations. In addition, it is a unique context where there is no developed capital market, therefore, Myanmar banks only engage in traditional banking activities. The study draws upon Scott's institutional theory and Oliver's strategic responses to institutional pressures. It is a qualitative study using interviews with the banks in Myanmar. The results show that banks are highly institutionalised in the country and therefore, homogeneities among their lending activities can be seen. The main sources of institutional pressures are derived from the CBM and government. Even under the strict regulations where the banks are imposed with restrictions in interest and deposit rates, types of acceptable collaterals, and high capital adequacy requirements, banks have different strategic responses to these types of institutional pressures. It has also found that the culture that has developed over the years also play a role. As a result, the negative effects of strict regulations are more on borrowers than on the banks, in turn, hampers the economic growth of the country.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL SIXTEEN: BURMA'S 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY HISTORY 2**  
**CAPITAL ROOM NORTH**

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**PATTERN OF SETTLEMENTS IN BURMESE TRADE DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD**  
**ASUKA MIZUNO**

The purpose of this presentation is to clarify the transition of the pattern of settlements in known Burmese trade from the 1880s to the 1930s, and to estimate unknown trade at that time using a few fragmented sources. According to Saul, S. B., India acted as a "safety valve" for British balance of payments. Sugihara, Japanese economic historian, also stated that just prior to World War I, the trade surplus of Burma (which was a province of British India) contributed to about 40% of the total Indian trade surplus, and that this was equivalent to 16% of the total Indian trade surplus over countries other than the U.K. However, little attention has been given to visible and invisible Burmese trade due to a lack of consistent historical data. Regardless, I feel that it is essential to at least estimate Burmese trade volumes in the colonial period to understand the nature of its economy during that time. In this presentation, I first illustrate the volume of merchandise and treasure trade surplus/deficit over different countries using the

annual statement of sea-borne trade and navigation in British Burma, and then inference the volume of invisible trade about one to two years using estimations which had been done after independence.

**LEARNING CHINESE: THE CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC BASIS OF THE YUNNANESE IDENTITY**  
**MU-LUNG HSU**

Ethnic institution and ethnic economy are intriguing themes when looking at a disadvantaged group in a complex society. Since the late 19th century, a great number of Yunnanese, running away from military conflicts and communist reforms, have gradually migrated into the Shan State, Myanmar. Over the years of migrations, their strong sense of being Yunnanese and being Chinese has been reconstructed and embedded in the local political economic context of Myanmar. This paper, on a Yunnanese community in Myanmar, seeks to reflect on the cultural and economic basis of the Yunnanese identity in a plural society by focusing on their informal Chinese education, related non-profit and for-profit economic activities and affiliated religious traditions in relation to their disadvantaged ethnic status. On the one hand, based on recent fieldwork, this paper seeks to contribute to the ethnography of contemporary Myanmar. On the other hand, this proposed research will look at how different religious traditions could facilitate social exchanges between community philanthropies and the market in favor of ethnic solidarity.

**THE VISIBILITY OF BERIBERI? COLONIAL HEALTHCARE AND NUTRITION IN BRITISH BURMA**  
**JOANNA BARNARD**

This paper examines the way in which the British colonial administration responded to the incidence of the disease known as 'beriberi' throughout late nineteenth and early twentieth century Burma. Beriberi is today understood as a deficiency disease resulting from a lack of thiamine (vitamin B1) within the diet. Indigenous knowledge of this disease has been documented for centuries, though it began to emerge most prominently within British administrative and popular debates from the late nineteenth century onwards. The incidence of this disease was intrinsically linked to the development of an extensive rice industry, with far reaching social and economic consequences. Growing international scientific attention and experimentation linked beriberi to a specific nutritional deficiency, significantly contributing to the development of a science of vitamins. Beriberi is, in itself, an understudied disease, particularly in the colonial context. Drawing on archival research conducted in Burma and India, this paper will examine how this disease first came to be recognized in British Burma, particularly within institutional contexts such as the prison and the school. Its visibility within these environments prompted experimentation with diets and environments, and contrasted with relatively little attention endowed upon widespread rural incidence of the disease. This paper will examine the rationales which underpinned institutional healthcare programmes and how these fed into wider understandings of beriberi and nutritional deficiencies more broadly. An appreciation of the early years in the development of the science of vitamins represents a new way of thinking about colonial healthcare.

**BURMA, THE UNITED STATES, CHINA AND THE GUOMINDANG (KMT) PROBLEM IN THE  
1950s  
KENTON CLYMER**

Beginning in 1949, Chinese Nationalist Troops (Guomindang, or KMT) were driven into Burma as Mao Zedong's army advanced toward total control of China. They soon received clandestine support from the CIA and mounted an abortive invasion of Yunnan in 1951. The Burmese deeply resented their presence in Burma, feared that it might invite a Chinese counterattack, and complained bitterly about what they suspected was American support for the KMT. This in turn enormously complicated US relations with Burma and China. Most US diplomats opposed the KMT presence and wanted to see them evacuated to Taiwan; and finally in 1953 the United States seems to have mostly reversed its policy and helped arrange a partial withdrawal in 1954. The KMT continued to exist in Burma, however, with a major resurgence from 1958 to 1961, when a second evacuation was arranged. But some remained and occasionally mounted attacks against China, as well as against Burmese villages. Even today there are KMT villages. For many years they were central to the opium trade.

My paper aims to review and re-evaluate this interesting and highly significant Cold War development in Southeast Asia, concentrating my attention on the 1950s. The KMT issue has attracted limited scholarly attention. The first comprehensive account was Robert Taylor's study, published by the Southeast Asian Studies Center at Cornell in 1973, but it was written well before archival sources were available. The Secret Army, by Richard M. Gibson with Wenhua Chen, is an excellent recent account. My study draws on these published works but is based mostly on archival research in Australia, Great Britain, and the United States.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6  
PANEL SEVENTEEN: STATE, SOCIETY AND ETHNICITY IN POST-COLONIAL BURMA  
CAPITAL ROOM SOUTH**

**ORGANIZER: JOHN BUCHANAN  
DISCUSSANT: JAMES SCOTT**

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Panel Abstract

Scholarship on Burma/Myanmar's post-colonial period examines ethnic conflict and a range of regional/local responses to it. Despite the abundance of literature on civil war and its impacts, key questions remain regarding research methodologies and conceptual frameworks. Certain narratives have framed the descriptions and analyses of violence and conflict in Burma, whether they are produced by journalists, NGOs, governments or scholars. This panel identifies gaps in the existing literature and proposes new approaches.

This panel addresses broader methodological and conceptual issues related to society, ethnicity and state relations. The four papers in this panel present multidisciplinary studies that investigate varying forms of violence and local responses and adaptations to state building efforts in the

Independence period. The goals of the panel are as follows: 1) to present empirically grounded accounts of local dynamics in this period; 2) to assess the patterns of violence and responses by different actors; and 3) to present novel ways to analyze both the dynamism of the long conflict and its impacts on ethnic communities. In doing so, this panel challenges frameworks that generalize the “non-Burman” ethnic experience during this period by showing a variety of political, economic, cultural and religious adaptations by groups to the prolonged state of insecurity.

**THE RISE OF RURAL STRONGMEN: SOCIETIES IN TRANSITION IN INDEPENDENT BURMA**  
**JOHN BUCHANAN**

In the early post-Independence period, a fragmentation of authority occurred in eastern Burma as the proliferation of local strongmen (and women) took place. This paper compares case studies from this region with others in Southeast Asia during this period to address the question of what accounts for the emergence of powerful, rural strongmen? In particular, I examine their basis of authority. Drawing from archival sources and interviews, this paper utilizes a state-society approach and focuses on the control of resources by strongmen and exogenous shocks that cause societal dislocations.

Local strongmen, or “men of prowess”, have been a persistent feature of Southeast Asia’s political and social organization for centuries. They have often played an important role as an intermediary between state officials and the population. Beginning at the end of the 19th century, centralizing forces have displaced the authority of local strongmen. States developed new administrative technologies and enhanced capacities. Rural economies became further integrated with the international capitalist system. Nevertheless, in conjunction with these centralizing processes, local strongmen persist and play a pivotal role in local state formation processes. Studies of strongmen in post-World War Two period of Southeast Asia have tended to focus on instances in Thailand and the Philippines. However, this component of modern social structure in Burma remains understudied. This paper is intended to fill this gap in the literature through comparison of strong men in eastern Burma with instances in neighboring areas.

**A MANAU BEFORE A WAR: CULTURE AND CONFLICT IN BURMA’S KACHINLAND**  
**NICHOLAS FARRELLY**

During the 17-year ceasefire between the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and the Myanmar government Manau festivals (Manau poi/pwe) set a regular tempo for confidence-building in northern Burma. These festivals showcased “Kachin” unity, but also provided special opportunities for peaceful interactions between ethnic minorities and the government. This set of interactions formally ended on 9 June 2011 when the ceasefire was obliterated in a confluence of old frustrations and collapsed negotiations. The over-arching cause of the new conflict was failure to bring Kachinland’s most significant sub-nationalist movement, the KIO, into Burma’s new parliamentary framework. This paper argues that the new war is best understood in the cultural and conflict context established during the years of ceasefire. During the preamble to the re-ignited civil war contested visions of ceasefire politics and priorities became ever more potent. The Manau festival held in January 2011 to mark the 63<sup>rd</sup> Kachin State Day was the region’s last major public event before the resumption of hostilities. In this paper that 2011 Manau festival is

re-cast as a forum for thinking about civil war in Burma, and for considering the past, present and future of relations between the Myanmar government and ethnic minorities.

**QUANTIFYING AND QUALIFYING THE HUMAN COST OF BURMA'S CIVIL WARS**  
**DAVID S. MATHIESON**

Burma's six-decade long civil war is one of the longest running and least understood modern conflicts, both within the country and the outside world. Attempts at quantifying the human toll of the conflict are daunting. Challenges include uneven, unreliable, and classified or concealed data of military and civilian casualties, politicization of published death tolls by all parties to the conflict, the dispersed geographical sites of the conflict around the ethnic periphery, and the changing dynamics of the war from large scale engagements and fixed position offensives, to guerrilla warfare and uneven ceasefire agreements over the past two decades. In short, it is almost impossible to quantify with any credibility the number of combatant and civilian casualties in all of the conflicts since 1949. Yet by attempting to outline a basic methodology of calculating in a broad sense the human toll, it increases understanding of the types of war fighting tactics used by all sides, and the direct and indirect targeting of civilians. This paper will outline the limitations of quantitative approaches to understanding the human cost of civil wars, the historically uneven and often unsubstantiated figures documented in Burma's civil war since the post-colonial period, and the changing nature of the conflict and how it impacted belligerents and civilians over time. It concludes with a methodological proposal to merge quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to pursue a more complicated understanding of the dynamics of conflict, not just the generation of numbers.

**SETTING THE HAN LINEAGES AMONG DAI CHIEFTAINS: THE CONSTRUCTION OF KOKANG  
ELITE NETWORKS AS A FRONTIER INSTITUTION BETWEEN CHINA AND BURMA**  
**MA JIANXIONG**

Kokang is a Han Chinese settlement in the Sino-Burma borderlands. According to a local myth, the Kokang people are often categorized as the descendants of Ming political refugees. This paper aims to examine the historic transformation of Kokang elites' lineage organization from its affiliation with a Han Chinese chieftainship to its role as British colonial agent. In this transformation, business networks between cities of Lashio, Mianning, and Yongchang had been maintained in the Kokang areas. In the 1720s, the Qing government inserted a Han Chinese chieftain among the Dai (Shan) chieftains. The Kokang chieftain successfully kept its political independence from the triangle conflicts between three Dai chieftains. Since the 1870s, the British colonial authorities set the city of Lashio as a new political and economic center. After that, the new borderlines between Burma and China were drawn, the Kokang elites thereafter shifted their political loyalty from the Qing toward the British colonial powers. Their lineage system became a step stone for Yunnanese caravan businessmen to Burma. The Kokang political organization worked as a frontier institution and plays a pivotal role in the development of historic transborder mobility by extending Han Chinese lineage system from Yunnan, China, to Burma.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL EIGHTEEN: REFORMS, ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS AND THEIR RESULTS**  
**SANDBURG AUDITORIUM**

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**BURMESE/MYANMAR ELECTIONS – THEN AND NOW**  
**HANS-BERND ZOLLNER, DAW HLA HLA WIN**

The elections of April 1, 2012 were widely regarded as a big step forward both inside and outside Myanmar.

The paper will look at this assessment and partly challenge it from two different angles. Hans-Bernd Zollner will provide an overview on elections in Burma and Myanmar between 1922 and 2010. He will try to show that the Buddhist myth of the Maha-Sammata, the Great-Elect or Great-Select can be regarded as a model that still shapes the perception of a great portion of the Myanmar electorate.

Hla Hla Win will present a variety of observations from the 2012 by-elections.

**SOLDIERS, ACTIVISTS, AND MONKS: CONTESTING “DEMOCRACY” IN CONTEMPORARY**  
**MYANMAR**  
**MATTHEW J. WALTON**

After two and half decades of military rule, “democracy” was the rallying cry of Burmese citizens as they marched in 1988 to protest government abuses and mismanagement. That uprising was brutally suppressed, but democracy has remained at the center of calls for change in the country since that time. While many observers inside and outside of the country have maintained a healthy skepticism of the reforms enacted by the quasi-civilian government since 2011, it is difficult to deny that Myanmar has begun a transition in a democratic direction. What is less clear is what various groups and actors mean when they speak of “democracy.”

In this paper I examine understandings of democracy among three broadly conceived groups: the government (including the former and current governments), the democratic opposition, and monks. The boundaries separating these groups are not always clear and there is considerable difference of opinion within them as well. I draw on writings, speeches, policy statements, interviews, and monks’ public sermons to present a wide range of understandings of democracy in contemporary Myanmar. While some notions draw more heavily from liberal democracy others interpret democracy through a lens of Buddhist principles. Furthermore, despite the diversity of viewpoints, there are some striking similarities, particularly the focus on notions of unity and discipline as being central to democratic practice. Additionally, all three of these groups use language that suggests that democracy, and politics in general, is a quintessentially moral practice.

Citing case study examples of new programming in response to changed context, this paper finds that the enlarged humanitarian space has broadened the diversity of development approaches being employed, particularly creating additional opportunity for collective action, advocacy, active citizenship and expression of a rights-based approach to development. Implications and recommendations for international development assistance mandates are therefore considered.

**FROM MILITARY RULE TO ELECTORAL AUTHORITARIANISM: THE RECONFIGURATION OF  
POWER IN MYANMAR AND ITS FUTURE  
ADAM P MACDONALD**

In 2011, after more than 50 years of rule, the Tatmadaw relinquished power to a nominally civilian government following the country's first multi-party election in 20 years as part of a transformation of the political system to a presidential republic. Within this new arena, though, electoral manipulations and constitutional stipulations have brought to power a government consisting mostly of former military officers which are closely aligned with to the Tatmadaw. These reforms, therefore, have changed the nature and organization of the ruling regime from that of a military one to an Electoral Authoritarian form; elections now have become the main conduit to accessing power.

Despite the maintenance of authoritarian rule (and the unclear motivations promoting such system change) the opening of the political realm and civil society has introduced new actors in the process, allowing possibilities for new identities, interests, and relationships to be constructed. A number of developments over the past few years such as the release of political prisoners; the legalization of protests and labour unions; renewed efforts to bring peace to the ethnic border lands; allowing previously persecuted entities to take part in the political realm and the re-establishment of relations with Western states are tentatively positive signs that Myanmar is undergoing a fundamental political change distinct from the years of military rule. In particular the interactions of actors within and across civil-military, central-regional, and foreign relations will come to define the future trajectory of these reforms. Ultimately the willingness of the Tatmadaw to abandon its praetorian ethos of directing the political process, specifically over security policy areas, will determine whether the system remains primarily in the service of regime maintenance or becomes an arena of increasingly diverse, free and fair political discord with the possibility of power being assumed by those not under military tutelage.

**A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY?  
USING BURMA'S RECENT ELECTIONS TO CONCEPTUALIZE REGIME CHANGE  
NICOLE LORING**

This paper seeks to conceptualize the recent political changes in Burma by examining the country's most recent elections in November 2010 and April 2012. The general election in November 2010 was the first (albeit not particularly democratic) election in Burma since 1990, and resulted in the first (technically) civilian government since Ne Win's military coup in 1962. The by-elections in April 2012 are significant because Aung San Suu Kyi, the co-founder of the National League for Democracy and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, was allowed to run for office for the first time since the NLD received a landslide victory in the 1990 elections (which resulted in her subsequent house arrest). Her victory in winning a Parliament seat is considered by many

to be a dramatic step forward in creating a multiparty system in Burma, and could even indicate a potential presidential bid for the former dissident in the elections scheduled for 2015.

This paper will discuss the lead-up and results of both elections, including reactions from international onlookers and election monitors, Burma's changing relations with the international community, and continuing conflict with various dissident groups. By examining the political climate and results of the elections in Burma, this paper provides preliminary groundwork upon which further study of regime change will be based. This paper finds that improvements in the electoral process between the 2010 and 2012 elections may provide a window of opportunity for real regime change to take place in Burma.

**BURMA: ENTERING THE GOOD NEWS COLUMN” [AGAIN]? : A RETROSPECTIVE AND  
PROSPECTIVE LOOK AT RECENT “STUNNING REFORMS  
MYINT ZAN**

In August 1979 Professor Robert Taylor published an article (probably in The Wall Street Journal) or another periodical entitled ‘Burma: Entering the Good News Columns’ which first stated that in ‘recent years’(during the 1960s and 1970s) news coming out of the country would seem to indicate that it has gone ‘to hell in a wheel barrow’. Taylor asserted that the then Burma Socialist Programme Party government after consolidating its powers(like the Burmese kings of yore) for more than 15 years is now poised to make some (economic) reforms and a further good news is likely to come out of the country.

Government-owned English language newspapers reproduced Professor Taylor’s article in full with a short introduction praising his analysis as both ‘intelligent and enlightening’. The rest as they say is ‘history’ with events leading to the failed 1988 uprising Yet ‘another consolidation’ or ‘restoration’ of law and order took place for more than two decades which do not bring ‘good news’-for the overwhelming majority of the Burmese people.

With the assumption of power with the (partly) new government of President U Thein Sein the number of foreign observers (not merely) scholars are almost gushing about the ‘good news’ emanating from the country. Many of them have claimed, one could say almost ‘exulted’ that the reforms initiated are no less than ‘stunning’.

The presentation will have a retrospective and prospective look at the ‘stunning’ reforms and the events, causes and (perhaps) hidden objectives and tactics of these reforms and what might have led to them. It would deal in particular with the judicial arena and to analyze whether there is any cause for even a modest expectation that the country’s judicial independence (which at least on a both internal and external comparative basis it did have in the first 15 years of independence) can be revived. It would also consider whether the reforms (with an acknowledgment that there were reforms albeit not ‘stunning’) could bring genuine political space and less undemocratic laws, policies and practices in the country.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL NINETEEN: MUSIC AND VISUAL PERFORMANCE IN BURMA**  
**REGENCY ROOM**

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**DANCING PARTNERS: THE INFLUENCE OF THAI RAMAYANA MASKS ON THE ARTS OF THE**  
**KONBAUNG ERA.**  
**BRYCE BEEMER**

The Burmese conquest of Ayutthaya in 1767 entailed the transfer of hundreds of Thai artisans to Burma's capital including palace dancers, musicians, and other performing artists. The result was a large-scale transfer of Thai performing arts traditions, such as the masked dance version of the Ramayana, into the Burmese royal setting. By 1789, palace officials were charged with translating the Ramayana play and accompanying songs from Thai into Burmese. This was followed in 1804 by the innovation of Yodaya [Ayutthaya] music, a hybrid musical genre that, in essence, enabled Burmese musicians to play Thai-style orchestral music. Scholars as varied as Maung Htin Aung, Khin Zaw and Maung Maung Tin all describe this process as a transformative event in the history of Burma's performing arts.

Yet, this cultural exchange was not limited to the performing arts. The key to the Thai Ramayana's rapid popularity was its remarkable visuality in terms of its slow balletic grace, acrobatics maneuvers, and vividly decorated masks. This visuality spread through all 10 of the royally sanctioned fine arts (pan seh myo); and when Ramayana characters appear in woodcarving, lacquer ware, silver work, etc., they are invariably dancing. The Thai-style Hanuman can be seen in protective tattoos and came to decorate soldier's weapons. Interestingly, artistic representations of ogres and demon were affected by the Ramayana dance, as green skinned Thai-style ogres displaced the monkey-like brown skinned monsters preferred before the popularity of the Ramayana. This talk will examine depictions of Ramayana at the Maha Lawka Mara-zein temple (1849) and a depiction of Mara's armies assault on the Buddha from the Mahamuni temple in which Ramayana figures are amongst the horde of evildoers.

A key point of this paper is to examine both the direct and indirect effect of captive populations, such as the Thai, on artistic exchange by looking at the spillover effect of the Ramayana on many artistic practices in upper Burma.

**THE DHAMMA GITA OF MAUNG KO KO: SACRED AND SECULAR MUSICAL FUSION**  
**GAVIN DOUGLAS**

Participation in musical events in the Theravada Buddhist world is deemed inappropriate for those who have taken monastic vows. Despite clear musical elements, the recitation of sutras and prayers and the chanting of scripture are not regarded as music. For the laity, music may have overtly Buddhist texts and associations but is considered suspect for religious practice. Scholars of Theravada music have reinforced this rhetorical divide between the sonic practice of monks and the art and popular music of the secular world by highlighting the seventh Buddhist precept

that implores monks "to abstain from dancing, singing, and music." Mahayana, Tibetan and other Buddhist traditions—where music is endorsed for rituals, offerings, and mediation—receive greater attention from music scholars. This paper highlights a variety of social and sonic examples that undermine, challenge and complicate such a polarizing depiction of Buddhism as lived in Myanmar (Burma). Chief among the examples will be a collection of songs by the Burmese composer Gitalulin Maung Ko Ko (1928-2007) who incorporated lessons of the Buddha into some of his later compositions. Maung Ko Ko's 81 Dhamma Songs were composed as a religious offering and ritually performed at a Mingun monastery honoring one of the most revered monks in the country the Mingun Sayadaw U Vicittasarabivamsa. This monastically sanctioned "song cycle" employs compositional strategies that stitch together elements of monastic chant and Burmese court music. With a variety of musical and video examples this paper will reconsider the complicated boundaries between lay and monastic music practice.

**THE BURMESE HARP: A VISUAL CONSTRUCTION OF A BURMESE IDENTITY**  
**CATHERINE RAYMOND**

Amongst the rich tradition of musical instruments found in Burmese cultures, the Burmese Harp, saung gauk, has become a visual element of Burmese identity similar to the ozi for the Shan etc. Well known under the Pyu, and celebrated by the Chinese under the Tang Dynasty, the harp's popularity continued, as delineated down from the Pyu through the Pagan period: numerous illustrations traced the harp's associations with episodes of the life of Buddha. While later on during the Nyaungyan, Ava, Toungoo and Konbaung periods, its function was not only associated with Buddhism and/or with the court rituals but also with specific nats. In looking back to the use of the harp since Pagan period and as depicted on religious monuments, on parabaik, and other manuscripts, this paper addresses the questions when, how, and why — amongst the rich tradition of musical instruments found in Burmese culture— the Burmese arched harp become the only “instrument of identity.” Based not only on ethnomusicology but also on visual analyses from various sources, we explore how the instrument evolved from its narrower Buddhist associations to become an icon of national identity.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL TWENTY: LINGUISTICS 2**  
**CAPITAL ROOM NORTH**

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**RITUAL CHANTING IN SUMTU CHIN - A REPORT OF RECENT LINGUISTIC FIELDWORK**  
**JUSTIN WATKINS**

A research project is being undertaken to document the ritual form of Sumtu, a southern Chin (Tibeto-Burman) language spoken by about 28,000 people in Arakan State, Burma. During pre-colonial times, ritual Sumtu was understood by the wider community and used in rituals and festivals. The arrival of Christian missionaries during colonial times caused widespread decline in ritual practices, and today ritual Sumtu is now completely intelligible to all but a handful of

Sumtu speakers. The ritual form of the language is performed in ceremonies by only three spirit mediums now in their 70s or 80s and will end with their deaths.

The object of this study is a chant called /k<sup>h</sup>un ju/, recorded in Burma in November 2011, which comprises a general prayer lasting about 15 minutes followed by a 15-minute house-blessing ceremony. The text of this and other rituals are currently being transcribed and translated but are currently poorly understood. They form part of an oral culture which has never been written down, and are performed from memory only whole and never in part.

The 400 or so lines of this performance of /k<sup>h</sup>un ju/ vary greatly in length, metre and melody. At one extreme, some lines are sung in a uniformly iambic metre, hanging on a more or less constant pitch (c. 190Hz). At the other, lines are ametrical and sung pitch gives way to spoken intonation and the delivery is much more like speech. In addition, we find a variety of line-initial and line-final vocal flourishes and embellishments which make use of a range of phonation types.

This paper examines and quantifies the range of variation within this performance, and describes some of the distinctive detail, in terms of pitch, rhythm and phonation type using a variety of acoustic measurements. These are further compared to samples of the performer's spoken voice. The presentation is accompanied by recorded examples and some video.

The presentation will include basic information about Sumtu, including glossed translations of passages of chanted ritual Sumtu.

## THE NATURALIZATION OF INDIC LOANWORDS INTO BURMESE NATHAN WAXMAN

The incorporation and assimilation into Burmese, in both its literary and colloquial manifestations, of Indic (i.e., Pali and Sanskrit) loan words is one of its most conspicuous features.

We identify three distinct patterns of assimilation or transformation, as follow:

### 1) Twinning or Bifurcation

We shall discuss the presence of simultaneous cognates, such as *Yogi*: (meditation practitioner) and *zo gji*, (wizard), where the latter develops a specialized denotation beyond the original Indic semantic focus. We will review *gaba* (earth, world or eon) and its bifurcations *ka`* and *kappa* (eon), and juxtapose these against the inverse space-to-time transformation manifested in the colloquial *khi`*, (domain in time), and contrast it with its Indic precursor *kshetra* (domain in space), as manifested in *Srikshetra* – the ancient capital.

### 2) Specialization

We will review the process of specialization or focusing of meaning in Burmese as manifested in the metonymic transformation of *te` kathou* from a place name associated with higher learning in the Jatakas to the word for university.

3) Generative Base Nouns

Finally, we shall discuss the utilization of generative Indic base nouns, such as *da`* (Pali – *dhatu*, root) and *se`* (Pali – *Cakka*, circle) to create an expanding inventory of neologisms denoting newly encountered technologies and concepts.

Burmese has, over the past millennium, incorporated, assimilated and adopted an extraordinary array of Indic lexemes, ranging from the metaphysical to the mundane, from both Pali and Sanskrit, and has naturalized them as its own.

**GUNPOWDER AND LANGUAGES**  
**LAICHEN SUN**

The impact of technology on world languages is a topic that has not been broached (to my knowledge). This paper traces how gunpowder technology has led to the creation of many new expressions in Asian languages and beyond. Specifically, gunpowder related materials and technology, including saltpeter, gunpowder (black powder), gun, cannon, firecracker, and firework, have entered most (if not all) world languages and as a result a large number of sayings, proverbs, idioms, slangs, wits (xiehouyu in Chinese) are born. The languages covered in this paper include Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korea, Vietnamese, Burmese, Thai, Cambodian, Tagalog, Indonesian), European (English, German, Dutch, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian), African (Yoruba, etc.) languages. This research argues that gunpowder technology is a technology that has influenced and enriched world languages much more than any other technologies in the world. This current study is a part of a larger project “An Age of Gunpowder in Eastern Eurasian, c. 1400-1900” which aims to modify the popular and influential concept the “gunpowder empire” by paying attention to how gunpowder has affected the lives of the common people, including the languages they speak.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**

**PANEL TWENTY-ONE: POLITICAL REFORM IN MYANMAR AND SINO-MYANMAR RELATIONS IN  
POST GENERAL ELECTIONS ERA  
SANDBURG AUDITORIUM**

**DISCUSSANT: DAVID STEINBERG**

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**SINO-MYANMAR RELATIONS AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION IN 2010: CHALLENGES AND  
PROSPECT  
LI CHENYANG**

Prior to the 2010 general elections, China has for a long time been the most important partner; yet contradictions in their relationship have also existed all the time. Meanwhile, Myanmar has been trying to seek for improvement of its relationship with the Western countries. After the 2010 general elections in Myanmar, China-Myanmar relations still maintained, on the whole, a friendly and cooperative posture. However, it is an obvious fact that challenges for the China-

Myanmar relations from the changes in Myanmar's domestic political situation and the improvement of its relations with the Western countries, still exist. In the future, geopolitical and economic factors in the relationship between China and Myanmar will remain as they are now. The cooperations in political, economic and social areas between the two countries will continue to expand; but the situation in which China comes out at the top of the list of various big powers in its interaction with Myanmar, will no longer be the case. Myanmar may get increasing initiative in the bilateral ties between the two countries.

## **ETHNIC POLICY OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND TENDENCY OF INTER-ETHNICITY RELATIONS IN MYANMAR DURING POST-ELECTION PERIOD**

**LIU ZHI**

As a developing country with multi-ethnicity, Myanmar has long been afflicted by ethnic tensions and conflicts. Ethnic issue is the key factor since its independence to present day that has reshaped political and economic landscape and foreign relations in Myanmar. With its inauguration in March 2011, the new civilian government has adopted new policies and measures to confront the volatile ethnic issues, and yielded considerable positive change and tendency, which have great impact on status quo in Myanmar. This paper further explores and reviews the ethnic policy since the inauguration of the new government, and probes into the prospect of inter-ethnicity relations and its impact on the political situation in Myanmar. The main perspectives are:

1. The ethnic political parties have played an enhanced role in Myanmar political arena. Through this election, ethnic minorities have occupied a number of seats in the Union and local parliaments proportioned to their population. Amongst the legislature of the seven ethnic states, local ethnic political parties take hold of 25% of seats in Chin, Kachin, Rakhine, and Shan state, which means that they are capable to summon special legislative meeting or repeal local government officials.
2. The U Thein Sein administration has adopted more proactive measures to facilitate negotiations with ethnic groups, and substantial dialogues have been conducted with ethnic armed forces like United Wa State Army (UWSA) and Kachin Independence Army (KIA). Presently the central government has signed off on new peace or ceasefire agreements with UWSA and Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA).
3. Despite the fact that some appeasing signs emerge in the ethnic relation, core divergence between Myanmar government and ethnic groups remains unresolved due to the inertia of long disputes, and clashes in part of the country will last for a certain time, as in the case of KIA. The negotiation with UWSA on Border Guard Force (BGF) is also difficult to obtain substantial progress.
4. Given the deep-rooted, complex, and economic, political and cultural differentiation between the frontier area and Burma proper, Burmese Chauvinism and ethnic separatism have been forged by history and impossible to be eliminated within a short period. The final resolution of Myanmar ethnic issues do not rely only on official ethnic policy, but also on revitalization and development of economy, covering of developing gap between ethnic areas and government controlled area, stabilization of political situation, and the attitudes of ethnic leaders and international environment. The way ahead will be enduring with ups and downs.

**BUSINESS ELITES AND REFORM IN MYANMAR**  
**ZHU XIANGHUI**

The making of Myanmar's business elites is reliant on the institutional change in Myanmar's economic system since 1988. In accordance with political laws, the institutional shift in politics and economy will be illustrated and transformed into that of social echelons, as well as the tier of social elites. The inauguration of Myanmar military junta and the signing of ceasefire agreement with ethnic armed groups since 1988 laid a foundation for the incubation of business elites by setting up a legal framework characterized by relatively stable social environment paired with the craving for economic growth within the society. Most importantly, in comparison with the Ne Win era, the new military junta deserted the ideology of "Burmese Socialism" and market-oriented policy, opening the door toward economic chance for the business elites. Since the general election and the U Thein Sein government took office in 2011, the business elites, with the support of finance and connections, participated actively in the new election campaign and took grip on power in the parliaments. Myanmar's business elites are defined as a mixture of ambitious resolution of development, nationalism and cronyism. They have double effect on Myanmar's modernization drive.

**ECONOMIC RELATIONS OF YUNNAN AND MYANMAR: RENEWED CHALLENGES**  
**LU GUANGSHENG**

The author first explored the historical development of the economic relations of Yunnan and Myanmar from 1988 onward and analyzed the latest progress and core features of such relations. The new challenges faced by Yunnan-Myanmar economic relations since the year 2010 fell into the following analytical structure. The author believed that backed by the geographical advantage and particular international political environment Myanmar had been one of Yunnan's most important partners in economic cooperation. Nevertheless, these relations are confronted with renewed challenges including (1) the lack of complementarity in market, capital and technology still remains, which constitutes the biggest obstacle of further development of economic relations; (2) political transition taking place in Myanmar poses a threat of uncertainty to Yunnan-Myanmar economic relations; (3) redesignation of local ethnic armed forces puts Yunnan's trade and investments in Myanmar at direct stake; (4) Yunnan's position in the overall Sino-Myanmar economic relations is challenged and (5) Yunnan has to face with the insurmountable obstacle of being a decentralized local government which is allowed for limited role in transnational coordination and collaboration while bearing the brunt of immediate negative impact of Sino-Myanmar economic relations. If the above-mentioned challenges are not to be coped with effectively, the prospect of the economic cooperation between Yunnan and Myanmar will not be a rosy one.

**NATION BUILDING AND REGIONAL POWERS**  
**KHIN ZAW WIN**

After the failures of the past sixty years, a fresh attempt is being made at nation-building in Myanmar. The biggest manifestation of this failure has been the unending armed conflict, and a concerted, top-level effort is now underway to address this. A new wave of ceasefires have been

signed or are being negotiated. Ethnic nationality parties have contested elections at Union and provincial levels and make up a sizeable component in the Parliaments. There are also fourteen state and region governments and the structure of the state can be said to be slightly more conducive.

At the same time, development, ethnic rights and autonomy remain pressing concerns. It is being said that Myanmar does not have an ethnic minority problem, but rather an ethnic majority problem. While setbacks are occurring and there is the danger of things slipping back in the present early democratic transformation stage, there is also the promise of greater autonomy which could guarantee a lasting settlement.

The role of regional powers in this long-delayed project is assessed. Whatever regional power interests there maybe, the urgency of building a nation and nurturing a sense of Myanmar nationhood is of over-riding importance. The challenges in this final effort and possible ways to overcome them are presented.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL TWENTY-TWO: TECHNOLOGY, ART AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION**  
**CAPITAL ROOM NORTH**

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**MYANMAR LIBRARIES: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE**  
**JOHN BADGLEY**

My paper will briefly review the history of libraries from monarchical & colonial periods, as well as their post-Independence role. The body of commentary will focus on my experience with reconstruction of libraries and library holdings since Cyclone Nargis devastated Irrawaddy delta villages, towns and cities. I draw on the experience of Nargis Library Recovery, a 501-c-3 charity formed in 2008, and our partner organization, Myanmar Book Aid and Preservation Foundation. I will then examine the inter-relationship of our activities and the role of libraries in expanding access to knowledge under the current administration [and new Constitution] emanating from Naypyidaw.

The paper will conclude with commentary on alternative scenarios for libraries in the coming decade.

**INTERNATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND BURMESE MODERNITY IN BURMESE CINEMA**  
**JANE M. FERGUSON**

It will come as no surprise to observers of the motion picture industry that the silver screen presents a venue through which the latest styles and technologies can be displayed with consumerist and ideological intentions. In a country such as Burma, particularly during the 1962-1989 years, the closed nature of the economy presents a dilemma for “branding.” Whereas some mass media representations of engineering feats are broadcast with regime-legitimizing rhetoric, or aho-pyu, international technologies present a different problem for Burmese modernity.

Where the Motion Picture Organization imposed an increasingly “Burman” agenda on the film industry, visions of modernity also demanded technologies. Flash transport provides an important symbolic mechanism for that representation. How their international origins are obscured, or left unmentioned, though, provides for a useful exercise in cinematic blocking. The placement of the Dutch Fokker F-27 aircraft in the 1974 film *Tein Hlwa Moe Moe Lwin* (Cloudy Sky), and the Hindustan Ambassador car in the same movie are clearly of international origin, though they are controlled by Burmese characters in the movie. In this paper, therefore, I will consider the ways in which international technology is warily used in tandem with Burmese authenticity in Burmese motion pictures.

**CHALLENGING VULNERABLE CARTOGRAPHIES OF BURMA: AFFECT, ART AND HUMANITARIAN  
DISCOURSE  
EMILY HUE**

This paper will partially treat the feasibility of "Southeast Asian (American)" diasporic cultural production in venues of political and/or theatrical performance. In particular I examine how Burmese diasporic performances map discordant nationalist and regionalist perspectives of exiled/ migrant/ and refugee communities as they manifest in the United States. In the artwork of diasporic subjects online, in their live performance art and recent films *Burma VJ* and *The Lady I* interrogate current frameworks of legibility, audibility and visibility as the requisites for recognizable "objects" of Burma Studies. By interrogating vulnerable lenses towards Southeast Asia and Burma, there is an ever urgent necessity to interrogate the representations mapped between non-state actors and humanitarian sectors that have and will continue to impact the understanding of Burmese and other Southeast Asian, refugee and expatriate communities in the United States. This work comes at a time when dialogue across Critical Ethnic Studies and Critical Area Studies can offer a more robust inquiry of how we locate vulnerable and/or threatening bodies in the international imaginary after the Cold War, the Vietnam War and in the ongoing War on Terror. Prompted through periods of U.S. empire-building and acts in the name of democratic benevolence, these cartographies of Southeast Asia mark the potential of Burmese and American as coterminous. They also highlight the tensions implicit in the terms Asian American and Burmese American if these terms are continually recuperated as the apex of political activism. I argue for the ways in which actors' embodied practices of cartography disrupt current rubrics of belonging via legal and cultural citizenship.

**LUDU: A PRIVATE COLLECTION OPEN FOR PUBLIC AND ACADEMICS  
AUNG MYINT OO**

As the Burmese language collection of old periodicals and fictions are still difficult to get access in the government libraries in Burma, most non-native scholars have to rely on book dealers from Pansodan Road, Rangoon. So it is a big treasure for local and international scholars, students to find a rare and much collection in central Burma. It is generously donated by a family of press from Mandalay, initiated by the late Ludu U Hla and Daw Ahmar since 1960s. As they had a large network of local intellectuals in countryside, they could arrange to collect old press materials survived from the second World War. These collections also survived big fires in 1980s Mandalay and other insects of tropical climate. Now they are under digitizing for general public with internet access. Interesting tips on the collections of the Burmese press for more than a hundred years will be presented for the first time here.

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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6**  
**PANEL TWENTY-THREE: STATE AND SOCIETY IN CONTEMPORARY MYANMAR**  
**CAPITAL ROOM SOUTH**

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**MYANMAR'S CONFLICTING NATIONALISMS—MYANMAR'S DISCONNECTED  
ENVIRONMENTALISMS: THE CASE OF THE MYITSONE DAM**  
**LAUR KIIK**

This paper analyzes some of the original conflicts which led to the unexpected suspension of the Myitsone mega-dam project in Kachin State in 2011. Based on ethnographic fieldwork and discourse analysis, it looks specifically at the (anti-)ethno-politics of three discursive formations: that of the Chinese dam companies, the Kachin environmentalists, and the 'Save The Irrawaddy' campaign. I discuss how the dam project attempted to de-ethnicize the Myitsone construction site and disengage itself from the location's ethnic politics. But it was precisely perceptions of collective ethno-national experience, and religious, ethno-nationalist subjectivization, ontologies, and future-making that are at the core of the emergent Kachin environmental movement, which launched the first sustained anti-dam campaign. Later, as the pro- and anti-ethnic politics of Burman conservationists involved with the Myitsone project and the Chinese dam companies eventually clashed, the culminating Rangoon-based 'Save The Irrawaddy' campaign took on its own (ethno) nationalist fervor. These types of discursive politics of 'ethnicization' and 'de-ethnicization' are central to understanding many aspects of contemporary Burma/Myanmar. They are vital to understanding the natural resource and environmental politics—including the disconnect among the various ethno-national, state, and Western transnational eco-conservationist projects—in Myanmar.

**ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD: THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL REALITY BEHIND THE  
IMAGE OF POWERFUL WOMEN IN CONTEMPORARY BURMA/MYANMAR**  
**THARAPI THAN**

This paper will critically challenge the notion of powerful Burmese women and attempt to prove that behind the image of powerful women, there exist millions of women who remain disempowered, and who are denied opportunities equal to those of men. Using the most recent data compiled by the UN and the government agencies together with newspapers, magazines, novels and short stories printed in vernacular language, this paper will examine who created and sustained the image of powerful women, if and to what extent women themselves accepted that notion, why women feared when they attempted to challenge that notion, and most importantly, the real social, political and economic status of Burmese women in the society. This paper will also briefly talk about the sources scholars should examine if they want to understand the real world of Burmese women beyond the poster girls of the country from Daw Mya Sein to Aung San Suu Kyi.

**GREENING MYANMAR INDUSTRY: CHOOSING THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY TOOLS  
FOR REGULATING INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION IN BURMA  
YAN MIN AUNG**

This paper will be the result of a yearlong policy inquiry on how potential industrial pollution could be prevented or regulated in Burma at the time of its democratic transition. Tools are categorized into four main categories of command and control, market based, information disclosures and voluntary agreement. Each of fourteen different tools is investigated on its suitability in Burma's political, economic and institutional context. Corruption and institutional inadequacy on part of enforcing bodies in the country is identified to be the most prominent challenge that any environmental policy regime will have to consider.

Therefore choosing the tools that require the least amount of enforcing personnel is advised to be the most important task for any environmental policy maker in the country before corruption is effectively transformed. Keeping this challenging task in mind, information disclosure is identified to be the category of tools that is most promising at this point in time of the country's political transformation. Not only it could effectively combat industrial pollution compared to other candidates, it also has potential to empower local media and civil society, which will in time form a coalition acting as a balancing third force between regulating governmental bodies and regulated private industry. Information disclosures laws and policies will also pave ways for future innovative policy options by providing wealth of information for policy, environmental and industry researchers.

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**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7  
PANEL TWENTY-FOUR: ETHICS OF RESEARCH IN MYANMAR ROUNDTABLE  
REGENCY ROOM**

**ROSALIE METRO, DISCUSSANT**

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**PATRICK McCORMICK  
ELLIOTT PRASSE-FREEMAN**

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**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7**  
**PANEL TWENTY-FIVE: ROUNDTABLE ON CURRENT AFFAIRS**  
**SPONSORED BY: ASIA FOUNDATION**  
**REGENCY ROOM**

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**JOHN BRANDON**  
**DAVID STEINBERG**  
**U KO KO HLAING**  
**U THAN KYAW**  
**TIN MAUNG MAUNG THAN**