




# DAY 1 | Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November


**NOTE:** All times are in Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT)

A time and date converter can be found here: <https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>

T I M E	SESSION	PRESENTER/S
11.00am – 11.15am	<b>WELCOME ADDRESS</b>	<b>Marnie Feneley</b> President AMSEAS
		<b>Christoph Nedopil Wang</b> Director Griffith Asia Institute
11.15am – 12.00pm	<b>KEYNOTE ADDRESS</b> <b>Past Futures: Climate Change, Low-Density Urbanism and Risk - The Southeast Asian Evidence</b> : Abstract - <i>Angkor, the vast low-density Khmer capital founded in the 7 to 8<sup>th</sup> century CE, was largely abandoned about 500 years ago. What happened during the period of its demise can now be better understood through the relationship between its infrastructure, the economy and the changing climate of the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century CE. That relationship, between the way the urban complex operated and the changes to its environment, is critical for our understanding of the risks which climate change poses for the great low-density cities of the present - the vast megalopi and desa-kota of the industrial world. The issue is that the past two thousand years, worldwide, tells us that compact cities and their urban networks are very robust but the networks of low-density cities are not. In S.E. Asia, South Asia and Mesoamerica such cities have been especially vulnerable to severe climate change - and when they cease to function their entire urban networks also disintegrate. The implications are ominous, yet the past also indicates that social and cultural systems are robust and that people can retain and remake their social traditions as they adjust to seriously changing circumstances.</i>	<b>Roland Fletcher</b>
12.00pm – 12.15pm	 15 minute break	
12.15pm –1.15pm	<b>PANEL 1: RITUAL AND RAIN IN SOUTHEAST ASIA</b> <b>Cosmology of Climate: The Bridge Between Humans and Divine Climate Control at Angkor</b> : Abstract - <i>The Kulen Plateau, located north of the medieval city of Angkor, serves as a crucial water source feeding the hydraulic system of Angkor, along with its vast reservoirs. The plateau's riverbeds and caves are adorned with numerous depictions of Vishnu and Shiva, sanctifying the water before it flows into Angkor's hydraulic system and moats surrounding the temples. Is it possible that the increase in depictions of Vishnu and Siva on the Kulen in the 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> centuries are a result of a change in weather patterns. Eventually the Angkorian Empire succumbed to climate change impacts. The city's infrastructure was overwhelmed by intense fluctuations in weather which combined with civil and external wars led to a decline.</i>	<b>CHAIR:</b> Mark Vong Marnie Feneley – University of NSW
	<b>Power, Politics, Climate Change and Archeological Research in Burma/Myanmar</b> : Abstract - <i>This is an academic paper about writing academic papers about Burma/Myanmar. Reflecting the main conference themes, it examines cases related to power, politics and climate change, and suggests directions in which research in these areas might move. It reviews an important issue in some archaeological research in Burma, the over-reliance on past authority rather than objective analysis, using the misinterpretation of the walls enclosing the First Millennium Pyu city Sriksetra as a case study. The paper concludes that archaeological and other research in Burma can be greatly advantaged if empirical data is given priority over research methodology.</i>	Bob Hudson – University of Sydney

	<p><b>Ritual, Buddhism and the State in Myanmar—intersecting and conflicting roles in maintaining heritage:</b> Abstract - <i>In 2019 Bagan became Myanmar's second UNESCO world heritage site. Three criteria were accepted as demonstrating universal world heritage values. Criterion 6 recognises that many of Myanmar's distinct Buddhist traditions developed at Bagan and continue there today. Since 2019, the global pandemic, then a military coup, have interrupted many traditional Buddhist activities. Myanmar's Buddhist traditions have been subjected to upheavals before. After the decline of Bagan in the 13<sup>th</sup> century ritual activity diminished but continued through the centuries and were revived as Myanmar's fortunes rose. During the colonial period Buddhist patronage systems were eroded, and while Buddhism went through a resurgence in the immediate post-independence period, the 1962 military coup signalled yet another change in how Buddhists were able to maintain their ceremonial traditions. This paper discusses aspects of recent events and their impact on Buddhist traditions, and links these with events and responses in the historical past. Should history repeat itself there is good reason for optimism that the traditions will endure.</i></p>	Charlotte Galloway – Australian National University
1.15pm–1.30pm	 15 minute break	
1.30pm–2.30pm	<p><b>PANEL 2: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ELECTIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA</b></p> <p><b>Climate (in)justice): Views from the Ground:</b> Abstract - <i>Climate justice is an integral component in the whole climate change movement. However, in the Philippines, climate justice seems to be the most neglected aspect when it comes to climate discourse. Aside from a very few non-government organizations (NGOs) fighting for climate justice, national and local government units (LGUs) seem to put climate justice agenda among its least priority programs. Worse, attacks, abuses, harassments and killings involving environmental defenders are rising in the past years. This becomes most glaring in poorer regions. A review of at least 20 Philippine laws and policies related to climate change from 2008-2022 shows that only one law (Republic Act 9729) explicitly mentioned the term “climate justice”. The Climate Change Commission, the sole policy-making body of the government relating to climate change never mentioned “climate justice” in its National Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2028. This paper has threefold objectives. First, it highlights the urgency of doing climate action in the midst of heightened environmental plunder in the country. Second, it presents a critical analysis on the government's failure to address climate justice. Third, it proposes concrete measures on how academic institutions can help in advancing the climate justice agenda.</i></p>	<p><b>CHAIR: Sreang Chheat</b></p> <p>Jerry Imbong - Visayas State University</p>
	<p><b>Climate Change and Civil Society in Myanmar: Cyclone Mocha: A Case Study:</b> Abstract - <i>Myanmar is one of the world's most vulnerable countries to natural disasters. Climate change and broad-ranging environmental degradation are increasing the frequency and severity of severe floods, storms, landslides and droughts and resulting in loss of mangroves and forests and impacting local livelihoods for millions. The democratic government (2015 to 2020) made a commitment to the Myanmar Climate Change Strategy (2018-2030) and was making inroads towards addressing identified issues around the country. However, since the 1 February 2021 military coup, the situation has deteriorated dramatically. In lieu of the state, or lack of support by the state, it is civil society that is responding to natural disasters, especially at the local level. This paper presents a case study of Cyclone Mocha, a powerful and deadly tropical cyclone which affected local communities and villagers in northern Rakhine State in Myanmar in mid May 2023, resulting in a massive loss of homes, livestock, infrastructure and livelihoods. This case study provides a lens with which to understand societal responses to climate change in Myanmar in an environment of political uncertainty, and identify opportunities for capacity building and support, so desperately needed by the Myanmar people.</i></p>	Johanna Garnett - University of New England

	<p><b>Elections in the post-COVID era in Southeast Asia:</b> Abstract - <i>This paper examines the outcomes and implications of recent elections in Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Cambodia. These Southeast Asian nations held their first elections following a series of protests and political crises, made worsened by the COVID-19 pandemics. Election outcomes in all countries have shown both signs of democratic change and authoritarian resilience. Malaysia's election in 2022 led to an inconclusive result and a first hung parliament, paving the way to political paralysis. The Philippines' elections led to a landslide victory of Ferdinand Marcos Jr and Sara Duterte - children of past presidents with authoritarian legacies. Thailand's 2023 election ushered in a surprising win for the country's most progressive party, Move Forward Party. Yet, the pro-democracy forces have yet been able to form a government due to existing authoritarian institutions. Cambodia's July 2023 election has witnessed its long-time ruler, Hun Sen, taking extraordinary steps to repress and marginalise opposition voices and politicians. The CPP effectively won the election without meaningful opposition. The paper will address the lessons and implications of these recent elections in Southeast Asia and what it means for regional politics in the post-COVID era.</i></p>	Aim Singpeng – University of Sydney
2.30pm–2.45pm	 15 minute break	
2.45pm–3.45pm	<p><b>PANEL 3: GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS</b></p> <p><b>Developing Gender Inclusive Leadership in the Mekong Region:</b> Abstract - <i>Women's participation in education and leadership is progressing worldwide; however, women are still underrepresented in leadership positions across ASEAN countries, with only 2% increase in women managers in Southeast Asia over two decades. Since the ratification of ASEAN's Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), supporting gender equality and women's empowerment has become one of the important preconditions to ensure inclusive growth in the region. While overall there has been progress in the region, women have inequitably had a negative impact. Thus, it has become imperative for small and less regionally integrated countries such as Lao PDR that can benefit from an extended regional economic framework and from including the whole population in the workforce. A recent report by McKenzie<sup>3</sup> pointed to the positive impact of gender diversity in the workplace with companies having gender balance earned over 25% more profits. Thus, it makes business, economic, and societal sense to have more women in leadership positions. Thus, our study through inclusive leadership training for managers in the Mekong region aimed to understand the challenges for women's economic participation and empowerment along with the systemic barriers to determine opportunities for the future and supporting women's leadership to drive positive change and economic growth.</i></p>	<p><b>CHAIR:</b> Aim Singpeng</p> <p>Dhara Shah and Andrea Haefner – Griffith University</p>
	<p><b>Labour Lawfare: Colonialism, Communism, Globalisation, and Women's Agency:</b> Abstract - <i>Vietnamese industrial workers have been protected by Vietnamese labour law and some International Labor (ILO) Convention ratification for Vietnam since 1994. However, some inconsistencies exist between the Vietnamese labour code and the ILO conventions. In this study, I employ the concept of labour lawfare to examine how the absence of labour laws and how the inconsistency of the international and national labour laws affect the rural women workers' agency. The research was conducted with an anthropological and historical approach ethnographies and in-depth interviewing of rural women industrial workers in a commune in Dong Nai province. The research findings show that the rural women workers' agency was for survival rather than economic empowerment. One of the most disappointing findings emerging from this study is that the ILO conventions are a labour lawfare that helps capitalists take advantage of rural women workers' labour instead of protecting them as its intention. In whatever economic and political contexts—colonial, communist, or globalization, capitalists often find or have the power to find ways to exploit or take advantage of workers' labour.</i></p>	Do Thi Thanh Thuy – Simon Fraser University

	<p><b>Climate Change and Gender in Myanmar: Analysing the Varying Effects and Promoting Gender-Responsive Solutions:</b> Abstract - <i>Climate change is an urgent global issue, particularly vulnerable communities are at more risk. A country like Myanmar that is increasingly experiencing the effects of climate change is crucial to comprehend how women and men are affected differently in order to develop strategies for adaptation and mitigation. This research paper explores the gender related aspects of climate change impacts in Myanmar investigating the ways in which changing conditions impact women and men. It sheds light on how women and men in urban areas have roles and responsibilities investigating how their access to resources, decision making abilities and cultural norms influence how they adapt to climate related changes. It examines how women and men in climate areas like agriculture, fisheries and natural resource management perceive and prioritise issues. It highlights the gaps and differences in gender climate policies and actions in Myanmar. Furthermore this research delves into adaptation and mitigation strategies that consider the needs and contributions of women. By prioritising gender equality and social inclusion in climate change efforts, Myanmar can strengthen its ability to withstand climate related challenges while promoting sustainability.</i></p>	Rahamath Nisha S-SRM Institute of Science and Technology
3.45pm – 4.00pm	 15 minute break	
4.00 – 5.15pm	<p><b>PANEL 4: REGIONAL AND GLOBAL POWERS IMPACTING SOUTHEAST ASIA</b></p>	CHAIR: Sreang Chheat
	<p><b>Nested Asymmetries and Small States’ Strategies in the cases of post-independence Laos and Singapore:</b> Abstract - <i>Growing interest in and scholarship on small states in recent decades have contributed to our understanding of how states’ agency can still be exercised despite hostile international environments and relative material deprivation. The proliferation of small states studies, however, primarily extends the list of small states’ diverse behaviors but has not settled longstanding definitional debates on the nature of small states and causes of their behaviors. This article attempts to broach these questions by comparing the survival strategies of two markedly different states, Laos and Singapore, through an extension of Tom Long’s relational approach to states’ ‘smallness’ as constituted by asymmetry. Specifically, it investigates how Laos and Singapore managed their agency and autonomy despite what this article refers to as ‘nested asymmetries’ – complex arrangements of layered asymmetries between small states, competing regional neighbors (Malaysia-Indonesia for Singapore, China-Vietnam-Thailand for Laos), and global great powers (China-Soviet Union, and US-China). These two states seek to weaponize their vulnerability and minimize hostilities between larger competitors, thereby making conflicts undesirable and contributing to the existing peaceful external environment.</i></p>	Minh Son - Nanyang Technological University
	<p><b>Negotiating Reconciliation: Vietnam’s Cooperation and Struggle Approach in Engaging the United States on War Legacy Issues:</b> Abstract <i>How does Vietnam negotiate reconciliation with the United States and what are the determinants of Vietnam’s approach? Framing Vietnam-US reconciliation following the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 as a negotiation process, this research examines Vietnam’s agency in engaging its former enemy on five war legacy issues: reparations, missing in action, the fate of South Vietnamese, unexploded ordinance, and Agent Orange. Vietnam adopts a two-pronged approach of cooperation and struggle: cooperation entailing accepting US demands and engaging in joint collaboration and struggle involving rebuffing US requests and leveraging external resources to elevate Vietnam’s bargaining position. Three interdependent variables shaped this cooperation and struggle approach: power asymmetry between the two countries, Vietnam’s national interests, and Vietnam’s domestic political factionalism. This study employs international relations theories, supplemented by reconciliation, asymmetric negotiation, and domestic politics-foreign policy nexus. Understanding of Vietnam-US reconciliation, enriches the study of interstate reconciliation within International Relations, and offers a tentative theoretical framework to analyse how a weaker state negotiates reconciliation with more powerful former enemies.</i></p>	Phan Xuan Dung - ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute


<p><b>Perceptions of China Among Social Elites in Southeast Asia: an Analysis based on ‘The State of Southeast Asia: Survey Report’:</b> Abstract- <i>This study focuses on the current perceptions of China among Southeast Asian social elites, based on the China-related information in ‘The State of Southeast Asia: Survey Report’ published by ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute during 2019-2023. The study finds that Southeast Asian elites are highly concerned about China's "re-emergence" in Southeast Asia, its influence in the region, the direction of China's relationship with Southeast Asia, and the strategic choices facing Southeast Asia in the context of US-China relations. Southeast Asian elites expect deeper relations with China but also perceive China's influence in the region to be uneven. Moreover, there are differences in perceptions of China among different Southeast Asian countries. These factors will hinder further development of China-Southeast Asia relations. Faced with US-China competition, Southeast Asian countries adopt a cautious attitude and hope to alleviate the negative impact of this competition by promoting the "ASEAN centrality" and encouraging middle powers to play a more important role in regional affairs.</i></p>	<p>Qin Lin - Shanghai International Studies University</p>
<p><b>From Spur Line to Central Node: Laos in the Pan-Asian Railway:</b> Abstract - <i>The 1000-kilometre Lao–China Railway (LCR) between Laotian capital Vientiane and China’s Kunming has been lauded by many as a milestone for the Pan-Asian Railway vision. However, few scholars have noted how this line is a departure from the original Singapore-Kunming Rail Link (SKRL) blueprint. Through examining the history of discourse on regional railways in mainland Southeast Asia, this paper intends to explain how Laos went from a mere spur line in the SKRL into a central node of the Pan-Asian railway. What are the differences between ASEAN’s SKRL and China’s current Pan-Asian Railway vision? Why and how did Laos’ position in the regional railway blueprint change? What does this change mean for China and Laos? This research seeks to address these questions through both English and Chinese sources, offering three major arguments. Firstly, Laos’ geographical condition creates unique incentives for both China and Laos to pursue this project. Secondly, the existing conditions and bureaucratic system in Laos made the implementation of the project much smoother - especially when compared to China’s other HSR projects in Southeast Asia. Finally, China is able to capitalize on existing bilateral relations with Laos while further strengthening its own influence vis-a-vis other actors in the region.</i></p>	<p>Truston Yu - National Taiwan University</p>

END OF DAY 1

## DAY 2 | Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November


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TIME	SESSION	PRESENTER/S
10.00am-10.45am	<b>AMSEAS Annual General Meeting (AGM)</b>	AMSEAS President
11.00am–12.15pm	<b>PANEL 5: ENVIRONMENT POLITICS IN THE MEKONG REGION</b>	<b>CHAIR:</b> Mamie Feneley
	<b>Green Water Resource Assessment of Nam Ngum River Basin, Lao PDR :</b> Abstract - Laos has a land area of 236,800 square kilometers and a population of approximately 6.5 million. The study of green water resources in the river basin is essential for Laos, given the significant dependence on plants, which is a major consumer of green water. Besides, Laos is renowned for its abundant biodiversity, which provides habitat to a diverse range of flora and fauna. By combining the outputs of CROPWAT and GIS models, it is possible to identify areas of highwater demand and potential water scarcity, and to develop strategies for sustainable water management in Laos.	Phetviengkham Onexayvieng,- Institute Technology Bandung  Nugroho Adi Sasongko, Andrea Haefner, Martin Anda, Acep Purqon
	<b>Environmental Politics Under Authoritarian Regimes: Experiences from Southeast Asia:</b> Abstract - This working paper explores how authoritarian regimes in mainland Southeast Asia have engaged with, and responded to, environmental activism. Drawing upon the experiences of three Mekong states, we survey broad themes in environmental activism and advocacy in the electoral authoritarian state of Cambodia, and one-party states of Vietnam and Laos. The paper critiques the simplistic liberal literature concerning democratic transition which typically view civil society actors as democratic agents. By adopting a critical political economy approach to the study of environmental politics related to the hydropower development in the Mekong, the paper contends that different states have both harnessed civil society in pursuit of their legitimacy and power while at the same time seeking to control civic space. We also argue that the domestic political and socioeconomic contexts in each state, as well as how actors engage in regional level advocacy, can shed light on our understanding of environmental advocacy under authoritarian conditions.	Melissa Curley and Sreang Chheat – University of Queensland
	<b>Diverse mechanisms of the indigenous land claims and livelihoods in Cambodia:</b> Abstract - The Cambodian state uses indigenous landscapes to enhance their authority and control over resources, whether by zoning customary lands as protected areas or by granting to the plantation companies. Conservation NGOs have been entangled in green grabs and various conservation schemes with state institutions. Lowland migrants and powerful elites also enter indigenous landscapes to similarly control customary lands. This research explores how indigenous people engage with various institutions, actors and interventions to negotiate their land claims and how these negotiations in turn shape their lives and relationships to land. This study builds on two case studies in Bunong indigenous groups in Mondulkiri, Cambodia. Bunong are not simple victims of land grabs but have been trying to use and combine the diverse institutions and mechanisms that are available to them to advance their claims in a form of “institutional bricolage” However, a bricolage view of land negotiations does not imply that the Bunong will achieve land security.	Sarou Long - Australian National University

	<p><b>Water Governance in the Mekong Region: The role and impact of civil society organisations:</b> Abstract - <i>The Mekong River basin is facing growing challenges in managing water resources, environmental protection, and sustainable development whilst fostering rapid economic development within a region of riparian states. The need for cheap and renewable energy is rising, fostering the increase in hydropower development where logistically possible. This presentation focuses on what role and impact civil society organisations play regarding water governance in the Mekong region, particularly the influence on decision-making in regard to hydropower projects. A particular focus is on the Mekong River Commission and its Procedures for Notification, Prior Consultation and Agreement (PNPCA). To date, over 50 projects have been submitted to the MRC and its PNPCA, with six projects being prior consultation cases. Whereas the MRC and its consultation process created some space to share guidelines and regional discussion of large-scale infrastructure impacts with interested stakeholders, civil society and communities, it resulted in mixed outcomes and frustrations by some stakeholder groups. Examples used to showcase the role and impact of civil society engagement, include the Xayaburi and Pak Lay dams</i></p>	<p>Andrea Haefner – Griffith University</p>
<p>12.15pm–12.30pm</p>	<p> 15 minute break</p>	
<p>12.30pm–1.30pm</p>	<p><b>PANEL 6: HUMAN RIGHTS IN MYANMAR</b></p> <p><b>International Criminal justice? The International Criminal Court’s Disconnection from Accountability in Myanmar:</b> Abstract - <i>The International Criminal Court’s Registry reports about its outreach efforts speak of two worlds: one of a public affairs-focused bureaucratic international institution – and another of diverse priorities, insecurity and human rights violations, and complicated interactions among communities, organisations and states. Two-directional engagement with different interested actors is crucial for transitional justice mechanisms, including courts, to meet their aims and purposes. Scholars have identified “lessons” for conducting effective communications, including outreach, for information dissemination, building support, and conducting legitimate and safe trials. This paper analyses documents and draws on limited interviews to explore how, despite these insights being represented in ICC strategies, disconnection between the ICC and interested actors in its investigation of violence against the Rohingya persist, including separation from the dangers faced by witnesses and victim survivors - and from violence within Myanmar beyond Rakhine State. It argues that the ICC’s continued failure to integrate experiences or its own strategies for two-way communication undermines its ability to fulfil its purposes – and disconnects this international institution even further from politics and power in Mainland Southeast Asia.</i></p>	<p><b>CHAIR:</b> Charlotte Galloway</p> <p>Emma Palmer – Griffith University</p>
	<p><b>Regional Integration and the Myanmar Crisis: Navigating the Delicate Balance Between Human Rights and Non-Interference Policy in the ASEAN:</b> Abstract - <i>Southeast Asian countries are currently grappling with a significant rise in authoritarianism within the region. In this context, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is expected to play a pivotal role in safeguarding peace and prosperity throughout the region. However, the Myanmar crisis has exposed a deep fracture within ASEAN. The stability and tranquility that have characterized at sometimes the ASEAN region are now severely threatened. The full-scale civil war in Myanmar, which originated from the coup d’état in 2021 following a protracted period of internal strife and the marginalization of the Rohingya population, is not an isolated incident. Instances of conflict and coup d’états persist across ASEAN. For example, the 2014 coup in Thailand, the chronic crackdown in Cambodia and Vietnam, the tensions around the South China Sea, and the growing separatist movement in Papua illustrate the volatile policy landscape within ASEAN. This work’s main objective is to address whether ASEAN should consider reforming its mechanisms, with particular attention to its no-interference policy. This paper relies on desk-based research, entailing a thorough review and analysis of the literature on ASEAN’s political history. The study employs</i></p>	<p>Aniello Iannone - University of Diponegoro, Laure Sigel and Nicha Wachpanich - Visual Rébellion Myanmar</p>

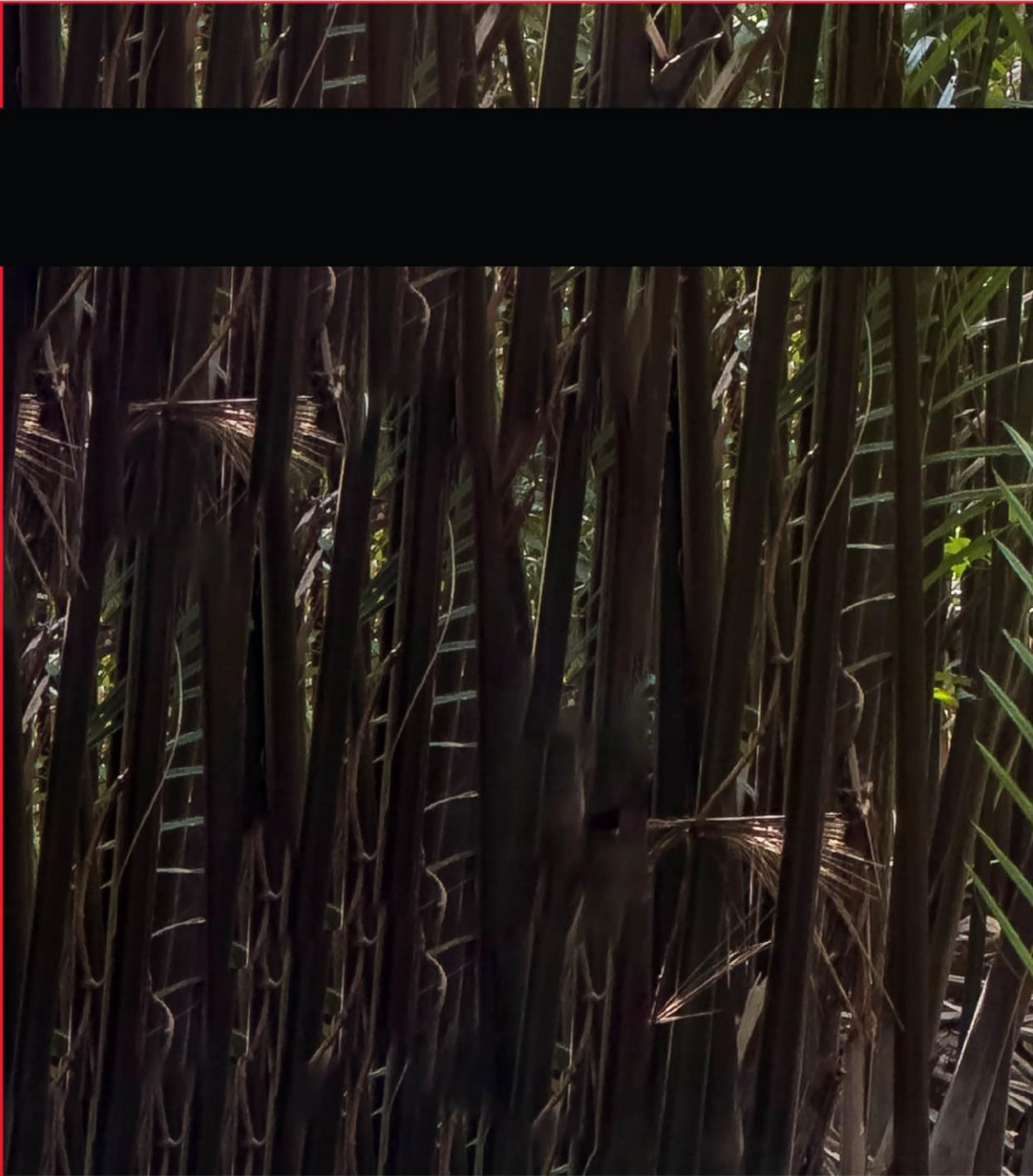
	<p>a critical literature review approach with a historical perspective on regionalism within ASEAN. By utilizing the advanced constructivist theory concerning the concept of norms, this article seeks to analyze the repercussions of steadfastly adhering to certain norms, explicitly focusing on the principle of non-interference.</p>	
	<p><b>Protracted Conflict in Kachin Areas of Myanmar:</b> Abstract - <i>The Kachin, one of Myanmar's eight main ethnic groups, have been in continuous conflict with Myanmar's armed forces since 1961, constituting one of the longest running ethnic conflicts in the world that has, to date, evaded resolution. This paper will examine the nature of prolonged conflicts how it impacts individuals and societies. Conflict narratives and military oppression has dominated the social and political landscape of Myanmar for much of its existence. Cycles of war and conflict have plagued the country, including, most notably, almost all the ethnic areas at the margins of the state, providing little or no opportunity for peace. Generations of ethnic peoples have not experienced a life without oppression; violence and fear have instead been a constant part of their existence. In this context conflict is commonly understood as being ethnically based within a dichotomous majority vs minority power structure. However, as this paper argues that there are other long-lasting deep-seated causes to the conflict that have remained unresolved and under analysed in the state-centric conflict literature.</i></p>	<p>Seng Maw Lahpai - Griffith University</p>
1.30pm–2.15pm	<p><b>PANEL 7: HUMANITARIANISM AND EDUCATION IN MYANMAR</b></p> <p><b>Forced Displacement as a Study of Communal Conflict in India's Manipur State:</b> Abstract - <i>Following the 2021 coup in Myanmar, like many other ethnic nationalities, massive human rights violations led thousands of Chin people to make their way to India from Myanmar's western hills. Many residents of Chin were forced to leave Myanmar and relocate to neighboring India, specifically Mizoram and Manipur, which shared cultural ties and an in-land border with Chin State. Approximately 60-80000 Chin people have migrated to India for food, shelter, and safety. Chin dwells along the Indo-Burma border. In contrast, a smaller number migrate to New Delhi hoping to gain UNHCR protection. However, the Indian government gives inadequate protection for Chin refugees, and living in the Manipur state of India is complex due to communal violence. Most Chin refugees have settled in Mizoram and Manipur rather than a refugee camp. As a result, when the communal conflict erupted in April 2023, Chin refugees in Manipur received the blame and were accused of being those who caused trouble. Consequently, this research aims to address the Manipur state's communal conflict and how the Manipur government politicizes refugee sentiment in Northeast India. This research proposes how cultural capital is essential to responding to the refugee crisis in forced displacement studies.</i></p>	<p>CHAIR: Bob Hudson</p> <p>Salai Vanni Bawi- Chiang Mai University</p>
	<p><b>Higher Education in Post-coup Myanmar:</b> Abstract - <i>The "Higher Education in Post-coup Myanmar Report" focuses on the significant impact of the 2021 coup in Myanmar, specifically on higher education. It explores the challenges faced by students, teachers, and educational institutions in the aftermath of the coup, highlighting the emergence of interim education programs as a response to the crisis. With the emergence of Interim University Councils and non-state education providers, these programs offer alternative pathways for higher education. This report describes various obstacles faced by students, such as electricity and internet disruptions, financial limitations, and security issues, particularly in conflict-affected regions. Although the education providers have made continuous efforts to offer online courses across multiple disciplines, ensuring access for underserved students in rural areas. Teachers participating in those programs exhibit unwavering commitment despite difficulties, including security concerns, adjusting to new teaching styles, and resource limitations.</i></p>	<p>James Htut - Spring University Myanmar</p>



2.15pm–2.30pm	 15 minute break	
2.30pm–3.30pm	<b>PANEL 8: FROM HISTORY UNTIL TODAY</b>	<b>CHAIR: Melissa Curley</b>
	<b>Southeast Asia Maritime Trade Under the Toungoo Dynasty: Abstract -</b> <i>During the Maritime Asian trade route, the shipping merchants with Southeast Asian traditional junks carried their export products and exchanged items for their local consumers from the harbour markets which seemed to be multicultural meeting centres for trading across the region. Myanmar port cities played the dominant role of Maritime trade and commerce below the winds with overseas countries throughout 16th - 17th century. The port cities of Pegu, Martaban (known as Mottama) and Syriam (now Thanlyin) were leading regional hubs of booming economy and cultural creativity. According to the travellers' descriptions, Myanmar port cities were the international trade network that produced and exported junks, big ceramic jars, and rice to overseas countries. Boatbuilding skills of specialized Mon villagers could be built about 20 large ships each year with the very best of Myanmar teak for their utilization and exported to Malacca. This paper emphasizes the rising and falling of Maritime trade under the Taungoo Empire and describes an academic approach with a journalistic point of view using serial photos.</i>	Pan Htwa Myo Sein - University of Wollongong
	<b>Writing a History of the Vietnamese Economic Miracle, 1992: Methodological and other reflections: Abstract -</b> <i>From around 1992 Vietnamese economic growth accelerated. In the three decades since, material conditions have changed greatly, but social differentiation and other familiar ills of modern change processes are clearly evident. The country experiences very high levels of corruption, which does not appear to inhibit growth. The paper will address methodological issues the author (retired) is facing in writing a history of the Miracle: amongst others, how to manage the large body of existing work, including that by themselves; the issue of intentionality and the ongoing tensions within the literature about the causes of the Miracle – largely debates about the role of policy and the Party's claims as the central change agent; how to manage tensions between Vietnam's specific characteristics and the country's presence in comparative studies, such as of 'post-Cold War Communisms', Mainland SEA, 'Sinicity', 'development' et al; how to manage the fact that Vietnam, like many other developing countries since the end of the Cold war, has serviced, rather than the donor-sponsored industrialisation orthodoxy; and how to re-inject tentative conclusions, such as the power of 'non-state' driven change, into discussions of contemporary development, given tensions caused by climate change, environmental decline and changing geopolitics.</i>	Adam Fforde - University of Melbourne
	<b>Ream Naval Base and the ascendancy of Hun Manet: a possible Prediction: Abstract -</b> <i>BlackSky published a collection of images captured over Ream, Cambodia, claiming the rapid pace of developments of a large Chinese military naval from August 2021 until July 2023. These pictures also stirred speculation among international powers claiming that China's military would use the naval base exclusively. Not only that but the USA urged for Cambodia's transparency over the military base in the coastal city of Sihanoukville. Here the question is not whether the military base is being used by China or not but rather the country's upcoming foreign policy in regard to the naval base. Whether the recent ascendancy of the new prime minister going to impact the country's upcoming foreign policy? And here upcoming foreign policy implies prediction. What can be predicted and what not? The conventional U.S.-China Security Competition in Southeast Asia evolved into an uneasy informal alliance like the China-Cambodia on one side and the US-Vietnam on the other. Not only that this competition is gradually involving other emerging players in the region. Who are they and how does it affect the region's (ASEAN) centrality? How it can be saved?</i>	Annesha Saha - University of Calcutta
3.30pm–3.45pm	 15 minute break	
3.45 – 5.00pm	<b>PANEL 9: SOUTHEAST ASIA AUTHORITARIANISM</b>	<b>CHAIR: Andrea Haefner</b>

<p><b>Mainland SEA as an Illiberal Authoritarian Solidarist Community:</b> Abstract - <i>This paper will offer a new approach to characterising the regionalism of Southeast Asia. In the past, some scholars have offered the security community as model, but the absence of genuine trust militates against this classification. Others have proposed that a “no war” community is a more accurate label. This paper will argue that mainland Southeast Asia, and particularly the mainland part of it, is becoming an illiberal authoritarian solidarist community (IASC). In an IASC the security of authoritarian regimes is strengthened through reciprocal recognition between members as a means of legitimation. It is further strengthened through the sharing of ideas and techniques to maintain authoritarian rule, and collaboration in the repression of dissent. This paper will argue that mainland Southeast Asia, constituting two communist regimes, a semi-communist regime (Cambodia) and two military dictatorships most strong exhibits the characteristics of an IASC. The example of Burmese-Thai military collusion will provide a case study. If this finding is true, and shared illiberalism and authoritarianism can be the basis of interstate peace, it will contradict the tenets of one on IR’s most robust theories, the Democratic Peace Theory.</i></p>	<p>Gregory Raymond - Australian National University.</p>
<p><b>The Milk Tea Alliance: the Latest Episode of Transnational Activism in Asia:</b> Abstract - <i>In the past decade, East and Southeast Asia have witnessed a rise in mass struggles for democracy, including in Hong Kong, Thailand, and Myanmar. While these movements were each triggered by domestic affairs, the protestors have found connections between one another, leading to an emergence of a transnational network dubbed the Milk Tea Alliance (MTA). The MTA quickly became integrated into the language and identity of these movements, especially on social media platforms. Despite its potential to challenge authoritarian governments in the region, rigorous accounts of earlier development, transfer of knowledge, and identity of the MTA are rare within the scholarly literature. This paper explores the MTA’s evolution by tracing the connections between civil society and democracy activists, particularly in Thailand, Myanmar, and Hong Kong, throughout the past decade. Applying aspects of social movement theory to archival materials, interviews with activists, and online protest content, the paper unpacks the MTA in a broader historical context by linking it to the contemporary history of transnational civil society networks between those locations. By surfacing the roots of the MTA, this paper offers a richer account of the network and allows for deeper analyses of democracy movements in the region.</i></p>	<p>Wichuta Teeratanabodee – University of Cambridge</p>
<p><b>‘Development Imaginary’ in Cambodia: a Visual Approach to Elite Capture:</b> Abstract - <i>‘You look at a flower and you find it beautiful, but when you open it, there are worms inside’, says an evictee in the documentary movie ‘A Tomb for Khun Srun’ (2015). This is a good definition of development à la CPP [Cambodian People’s Party] – a façade of prestigious projects and the less shiny behind-the-scenes of poverty, violence, and speculation. In 2014, journalist Sebastian Strangio analysed what he called ‘Hunsenomics’ (after prime minister Hun Sen) and the coexistence of official and shadow economies in Cambodia. To date, visual culture has been little used to address these aspects. Yet, it has the potential to shed a new light on elite capture. Taking cultural theorist Nicholas Mirzoeff’s definition of ‘visuality’ as a starting point, my presentation explores the representational strategies used by the authorities to articulate and impose their vision of Cambodia as a modern, forward-looking, and global player while hiding their plundering of the country’s natural resources. Using a broad range of materials (from social media/internet to personal documentation), it seeks to unpack the ‘development imaginary’ of multiple actors in Cambodia, retrace the different influences that have shaped and keep shaping this imaginary, and lastly juxtapose it with depictions of the current ‘development reality’.</i></p>	<p>Stephanie Benzaquen-Gautier - University of Nottingham</p>
<p>5.00 – 5.10pm</p>	<p><b>Closing Remarks</b></p> <p>Andrea Haefner, Secretary AMSEAS</p>

END OF CONFERENCE



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