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Graduate Conference - Social Movements in Contemporary Southeast Asia (SEA)

September 23-24, 2022

September 23, 2022

14.30 - 17.30, Aula Blu

Istituto Canossiano San Trovas

September 24, 2022

09.30 - 12.30, Aula Blu

14.30 - 17.30, Aula Blu

Istituto Canossiano San Trovaso

The Department of Asian and North African Studies of Ca' Foscari University of Venice and the Marco Polo Center for Global Europe-Asia Connections are pleased to offer a Summer School on Social Movements in Contemporary Southeast Asia.

Since the colonial period, resistance in the region has often been expressed via a broad range of social movements – a diverse array of collective actions, organizational strategies, and social networks that have catalyzed profound transformations in identity, lifestyle, culture, economy, and politics. Notable examples include the 1970s student movements in Thailand, the 2008 Saffron Revolution in Myanmar, and the 1986 People Power Revolution in the Philippines.

This Summer School will engage students in addressing the complex transformations brought about by social movements in Southeast Asia by considering the following three interrelated axes of enquiry: religion, gender and age.

As in other world contexts, young people in Southeast Asia have often been at the vanguard of political change. Their mobilization in the region has destabilized long standing social hierarchies. Many of these movements seek to question prevailing gender norms and advance new ideas of kinship and community. In doing so they often co-opt, contest and reframe those religious ideals that sustain existing power arrangements.

Whilst a growing body of literature has dealt with social movements in areas ranging from Western Europe and North America to Latin America and the Middle East, Southeast Asia remains understudied. Yet, recent “gay pride” parades in Vietnam, youth-led “digital protests” in Thailand and Myanmar, Buddhist environmental actions in Cambodia, “indigenous rights millenarianism” in highland Southeast Asia, and Muslim NGO activism throughout Indonesia, to name a few, have captured international attention.

The Graduate Conference will focus on the specific and distinctive features of collective social actors in this region by illuminating the central roles played by the youth, women, LGBTQ+ activists and religious actors in shaping, resisting, and/or contesting processes of cultural and socio-political change.

Convenors

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REGISTRATION

Registration is open for the Graduate Conference on Social Movements in Southeast Asia. The conference is fully hybrid and will be held on September 23-24, 2022 at the Istituto Canossiano San Trovaso and online.

Onsite Attendance Registration Link

https://apps.unive.it/prenotazioni/p/eventidsaam?_lang=en

Zoom Attendance Registration Link

<https://unive.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlkdeuurT4tHNExO4BBjNM1uOACjsx5m7ZG>

Please note that the online waiting room will open 30 minutes earlier than the conference start time.

GRADUATE CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA (also via Zoom)

Conference Programme

DAY 1 - Friday, 23 September	
14:30-14:45	<p>CONFERENCE OPENING</p> <p>Prof. Marco Ceresa Head of the Department of Asian and North-African Studies, Ca' Foscari University</p>
14:45-16:30	<p>PANEL 1: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS THROUGH THE LENS OF AGE</p>
	<p>Chairperson Prof. Catherine Scheer Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, France</p>
	<p>Discussant Prof. Giuseppe Bolotta Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy</p>
	<p>Where have all the students gone? Changing mobilization discourses in the press and the absence of Indonesia's Generasi '98</p> <p>Clarice Handoko University of Hawai'i at Manoa, US</p>
	<p>The Network Origin of The Thai Youth Revolution</p> <p>Akanit Horatanakun McGill University, Canada</p>
	<p>Youth civic actions in an authoritarian state: the case of Vietnam</p> <p>Yen Mai Thao Uppsala University, Sweden</p>
	<p>The Audiopolitics of a Corrupted Reform, Youth, Sound and Social Movements in Indonesia</p> <p>Rizky Sasono Mohammad University of Pittsburgh, US</p>
	<p>The Milk Tea Alliance: The Changing of Social Movement Landscapes in Southeast Asia</p> <p>Tuanont Phattharathanasut Waseda University, Japan</p>
	<p>What Remains: Trauma, Childhood, and the Revolutionary Experience in Central Vietnam</p> <p>Melody Shum Northwestern University, US</p>

	<p>The Fight for Democracy: A Comparative Analysis of Contemporary and Historical Youth Movements in Thailand and Myanmar</p> <p>Swan Htut Stanford University, US</p>
16:30-17:30	QUESTION & ANSWERS
DAY 2 – Saturday, 24 September	
09:30-11:15	<p>PANEL 2: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS THROUGH THE LENS OF GENDER</p> <p>Chairperson Prof. Catherine Scheer Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, France</p> <p>Discussant Prof. Richard Tran Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy</p> <p>Exploring the Affective Dimension of Social Movement: The Discourse of Body as Territory and Gendered Resistance to Extractivism in Eastern Indonesia</p> <p>Novadona Bayo Longgina Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia</p> <p>Democracy-in-the-un/making?: The politics of the pro-democracy movement in Burma/Myanmar through art and the digital sphere</p> <p>Johanna M. Götz University of Helsinki, Finland</p> <p>Problematizing English textbooks through a gender lens: A progressive movement for English curriculums in Thai higher education</p> <p>Suthathip Khamratana Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand</p> <p>Resistance through mothering under the Philippine “War on Drugs”</p> <p>Marielle Y. Marcaida University of the Philippines, Philippines</p> <p>The Changing Role of Women movements in 2021 coup: From being subservient to the national movements to the independent fighters</p> <p>Zhao Min SOAS University of London</p> <p>Gendered Labor Activism in Vietnam– Narratives of Morality and Care during the COVID-19 Pandemic</p> <p>Franziska Nicolaisen University of Passau, Germany</p>

	<p>Pesantren Waria Al-Fattah Yogyakarta: A Place Transgender Muslim Group Refashioning Themselves</p> <p>Fitriansyah Nuzul International Islamic University of Indonesia, Indonesia</p>
11:15-12:15	QUESTION & ANSWERS
12:30-14:30	<i>Lunch Break</i>
14:30-16:00	<p>PANEL 3: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS THROUGH THE LENS OF RELIGION</p> <p>Chairperson Prof. Catherine Scheer Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, France</p> <p>Discussant Prof. Edoardo Siani Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy</p> <p>TBC</p> <p>Thiha Amara Peace Research Institute Oslo, Norway / University of Coimbra, Portugal</p> <p>Multimodal Inventions: Social Movement Knowledge Practices of Transnational Rohingya Youth</p> <p>James Francis Cerretani Goldsmiths, University of London, UK</p> <p>Free Funeral Service Societies as a Buddhist Social Welfare Movement in Contemporary Myanmar</p> <p>Mu-Lung Hsu Arizona State University, US</p> <p>Young Buddhists, Javanese Buddhists. Reverse migration and religious entrepreneurialism in mountain Java.</p> <p>Roberto Rizzo University of Milan, Italy</p> <p>Religion and social movements through the eyes of Buddhist novice monks in Thailand</p> <p>Benjamin Alan Theobald University College London, UK</p> <p>TBC</p> <p>Reaksmey Yean SOAS University of London, UK</p>
16:00-17:00	QUESTION & ANSWERS
17:00-17:30	CONCLUDING REMARKS AND FAREWELL GREETINGS

	<p>Prof. Giuseppe Bolotta Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy Prof. Richard Tran Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy Prof. Edoardo Siani Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy</p>
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ABSTRACTS

Where have all the students gone? Changing mobilization discourses in the press and the absence of Indonesia's Generasi '98

Clarice Handoko

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In the context of Indonesia's pro-democracy transition from the end of the authoritarian New Order under President Soeharto in 1998, to the present Reformation Era, movement scholars have focused on the convergence, and subsequent divergence, of macro (conducive political opportunity) and meso-level factors (widening and deepening of student networks) to explain the success and eventual decline, of the student movements of 1998. Paying attention to the students' generational identity— colloquially invoked as the “Generation of 1998” (Generasi '98)— that united them in their goal of ousting President Soeharto, I question: i) How did the students decide to participate in the movement? And, ii) How have their allegiances waned in Indonesia's post authoritarian era? These questions magnify the micro-level role of student participants, as opposed to their leaders, disaggregating the student movement that has been predominantly represented by personalities.

Analyzing and comparing the discursive content of selected national magazines and newspapers from 1988-1998 and 1999-2019, I first hypothesize that the press, in the lead up to 1998, conscientiously appealed to the students' liminal age-phase— marked by intellectual pursuits and economic vulnerabilities. Then, I show how the press' increasingly populist stance from 1999 onwards has deterred the Generasi'98, who have 'graduated' from their student identities and prioritized their economic survival in the post-authoritarian economic landscape. To emphasize micro-level decisions-making, I will use in-depth interviews with the members of Generasi'98 to corroborate my findings from the content analyses. The

potential findings from this paper can help to make sense of democratization's dampening effects on student activism, particularly by showing the press' declining affinity for maturing student identities and their resulting absence from the streets.

The Network Origin of The Thai Youth Revolution

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Since February 22, 2020, Thailand has been under a time of revolution, a rapid and fundamental domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, a period during which the seemingly impossible, such as the reform of royal institutions, now appeared possible. For the first time in Thai history, university and secondary school students, particularly female and LGBTQ schoolchildren, have taken the lead in national protests. What is the origin and impetus for Thailand's youth revolution? How did young activists establish pre-existing networks that laid the groundwork for the revolution? What has been missing from existing analyses of the youth revolution is a historical explanation for the revolution's emergence. The article argues that the Thai youth revolution is based on the formation of youth activist networks in various regions through post-coup political entrepreneurs. It delves into the foundational moments of the revolutionary youth networks, and analyzes resources, ideologies, and legacies that shape the choices of the youth political entrepreneurs, engaging in the processes of youth movement formation. The article investigates the micro-foundations of the social processes of the revolution. It zeroes in on the inside brokerage processes, i.e., how post-coup political entrepreneurs connect ties and cultivate friendships among segregated young activists, and demonstrates how the processes occur via space creation. The underground spaces are the result of youth political entrepreneurs' efforts for activists to connect, learn, brainstorm, and organize mobilization and build and sustain cross-issue and cross-regional activist ties under authoritarian regimes. The spaces can be spatial, such as campsites, discussion groups, and workshops, or digital spaces, such as chat rooms and online training. The article focuses on the effects of two distinct spaces on youth movement building: campsites and activist houses.

Youth civic actions in an authoritarian state: the case of Vietnam

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This conference paper examines the formation of youth civic identity with a specific focus on youth training programs organized by different Vietnamese civil society actors, such as local NGOs, social enterprises, and grassroots networks. These programs provide training and materials to aid different forms of youth activism such as youth participation in the LGBTQ movement, youth actions towards climate change, and youth projects aiming at education equality. Combining cultural sociology with the sociology of emotion, this micro investigation illuminates the backstage of social change, addressing how youth participants are able to find pathways for social transformation and identity development even in a social setting where actions that overtly challenge the state's authority are deemed problematic and highly repressed. Utilizing data collected from participant observation at two training programs and in-depth interviews with 31 young adults who engage in these programs, I show how participation provides Vietnamese youth a critical venue to access alternative feeling rules, cultural toolkits, and activist networks, through which they develop a sense of civic responsibility and the desire to contribute to the collective. This study constructs youth as main actors of social change, recognizing that activism in an authoritarian society can take on subtle forms beyond protests and demonstrations. I argue that activism can be observed through training that provides youth participants with critical understanding of human rights, the laws, and different paths to development. This, accordingly, brings about a profound transformation in youth civic identity. The findings contribute to empirical understanding of youth civic participation in the Global South, advancing our understanding on the processes of social transformation within the limits of an authoritarian regime. It emphasizes that youth should not be regarded as passive recipients of participatory development; rather, they are active meaning-makers who intimately shape how social transformation unfolds.

The Audiopolitics of a Corrupted Reform, Youth, Sound and Social Movements in Indonesia

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This paper looks at the articulation of democracy in the sphere of independent popular music in Indonesia against a series of social movements twenty years after the fall of the authoritarian regime and the declaration of political reform in 1998. Departing from the recent political unrest surrounding three mass scale demonstrations: The Corrupted Reform (2018), the establishment of Job Law that marginalizes the labor force and environmental issues (2020), and rallies against the notion of re-election of President Joko Widodo beyond the constitutive two term of presidency (2022), this study considers a new generation of young politically conscious students (aged 18-25), and young musicians articulating democracy under the hegemonic power of state and capitalist economy. Through analysis of audio politics, this study scrutinizes the “sound of politics” and the “politics of sound from three musician-activists.” I investigate the sounds of singer-songwriter Jason Ranti, pop-band Tashoora, and indie-rock band, Feast, who, in different ways, have contributed to the atmosphere of democratization through their sound of politics. Their songs have been reverberating through recent social movements. However, the strong current of capitalism in the sphere of popular music can relegate this inspiring sound to pseudo democracy. Through their materiality of sound, social history, and political involvements, this paper aims to contextualize “politics of sound” and the positionality of young musicians questioning democracy. In general, the inquiry into audio politics will attempt to answer: “How does democracy sound like in twenty-first century Indonesia?” “How is sound being used as a tool for social movements while accommodating capitalist constraints?” “What significance do sound offer for the new generations of young activists?” Considering the swinging dynamics of politics in Indonesia, recurring political events, and their social impact, this study asks readers to reflect on contemporary relations between the regime and the people, politics and aesthetics, and sound and society.

The Milk Tea Alliance: The Changing of Social Movement Landscapes in Southeast Asia

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The loose alliance of Thailand, Hongkong, and Taiwan netizens under the name "Milk Tea Alliance" emerged in the online battle between Thai netizens and Chinese netizens. Despite starting from the meme war on social media, the Milk Tea Alliance has developed into a transnational movement to promote democracy and expand its membership to various countries in

Asia, such as Myanmar and India. This study aims to examine the interaction between the youth-activists from different countries and its influence on the dynamics of a campaign on the ground.

Focusing on the interplay of the Milk Tea Alliance with the Free Youth Movement in Thailand, and the Spring Revolution in Myanmar, the study could also contribute to the understanding of the impact of globalization on collective actions and youth movements in Southeast Asia. By understanding this, the study could develop a more nuanced explanation of the social movement in recent days and shed light on how a transnational social activism network has been established in Southeast Asia. This study argues that the Milk Tea Alliance has crucially changed the political resistance landscapes in Thailand and Myanmar, and helped internationalize these two social movements by helping the movement itself to envisage their campaign beyond the national boundary and connect with the activists in foreign countries. The Alliance also introduces international symbols and cultures, protest tactics and strategies, and human rights and democracy experiences in other countries into the movement agenda. In the end, the study of the Milk Tea Alliance will significantly contribute to the social movement studies and globalization studies in Southeast Asia.

What Remains: Trauma, Childhood, and the Revolutionary Experience in Central Vietnam

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Shortly before his death in Guilin, Guangxi, China in 1943, Hồ Học Lãm, a Vietnamese colonel in the Republic of China Army, recounted his childhood to his youngest daughter. Born in 1884, he was descended from the leading scholar-official family in Quỳnh Lưu Village, Nghệ An Province, central Vietnam. Only a toddler when his father died from an anti-colonial confrontation in 1885, he was brought up by his mother, a fervent anti-French insurrectionist. She often left home for extended periods of time. As a little boy, Hồ Học Lãm wondered around the village entrance and waited anxiously for her return. Having never gone back to Vietnam since joining the Go East Movement in Japan in 1906, Hồ Học Lãm became an indispensable contact for Vietnamese revolutionaries that took refuge in South China. Although he understood his duty to the revolution, he lamented that he never saw his mother again. My paper argues that experiences of trauma and loss had radicalized many traditional Confucian communities in rural central Vietnam. It challenges the existing historiography of the Vietnamese Revolution by focusing on age and emotions rather than politics and ideology. What was it like to grow up in an atmosphere of death and uncertainty? How did those who survived colonial oppression carry on with their daily lives? Did the desire to protect one's home and lineage strengthen the family and native-place networks that would later become essential to the construction of the Vietnamese revolutionary underground in South China? Based on memoirs and ethnographic observations in Quỳnh Lưu as well as Vietnamese, French, and Chinese-language archival sources, I follow Hồ Học Lãm's childhood and adolescence to examine why everyday experiences of instability and trauma in these rural communities provided an impetus that pushed Hồ Học Lãm's generation to seek a modern education abroad.

The Fight for Democracy: A Comparative Analysis of Contemporary and Historical Youth Movements in Thailand and Myanmar

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Youth activists in the Myanmar Spring Revolution and the Thailand anti-government protests fundamentally altered their countries' political futures. Through the lens of age, I will research how youth resisted long-standing power regimes, like the military junta in Myanmar and the Thai monarchy, and created inclusive democratic movements. In Myanmar, "Gen Z" activists adamantly resisted the 2021 military coup while youth activists in Thailand broke "lèse-

majesté” laws by openly criticizing the monarchy. In these efforts, youth activists led street protests and employed social media for coordinating international awareness campaigns, boycotts and fundraisers. Through a comparative-historical analysis of contemporary movements with past political mobilizations such as the 1988 student uprising in Myanmar and the 1970s student movements in Thailand, I will ask why youth today mobilized in large numbers and how they challenged repressive systems of power and traditional social hierarchies (including age, gender, ethnic background and class). What structural conditions did youth capitalize upon to resist enduring authoritarianism and build egalitarian pro-democracy movements? Compared to previous movements, how did the structural availability of youth, perceived political opportunities and cultural constraints to mobilization differ? An additional factor I will explore is the role of social media, specifically the “Milk Tea Alliance”, a digital network created by youth activists in Myanmar, Thailand, Hong Kong and Taiwan. I will conduct digital content analysis on hashtag activism (such as #FreeYouth, #WhatsHappeninginMyanmar, and #MilkTeaAlliance) to understand how social media allowed for transnational information-sharing and solidarity building in high-risk activism. Existing social movement literature, like the resource mobilization and political process theories, were developed predominantly in liberal democratic societies. Studying political contestation in Southeast Asia, an understudied region in social movement studies, will help us theorize how contemporary movements operate in authoritarian settings and especially how youth today lead substantial movements to uproot socio-political hierarchies.

Exploring the Affective Dimension of Social Movement: The Discourse of Body as Territory and Gendered Resistance to Extractivism in Eastern Indonesia

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In Indonesia, extractivism has spawned a wave of protests where women are at the forefront and use their bodies against the state's repressive symbols. This was prompted by the expansion of Eastern Indonesia as a resource frontier which truly resulted in permanent damage to the living space of indigenous peoples. Interestingly, the women protested shirtless as an expression of resistance to the expansion of extractivism. One of them is the shirtless indigenous women resistance against the state-led development of a large-scale

cattle ranch installation in Besipae, South Central Timor District. The arrival of the state project was banned indigenous peoples' access to the forests and marginalised them from their space of life. For women, defending territory therefore signifies defending not only its human members, but also its non-human members, such as water, and, indeed, nature and life itself (Leinius 2021, 212). This phenomenon seems to be parallel to the cuerpo-territorio (body as territory) movement which is common in women's movement in Latin America (Bidegain Ponte, 2014, Vargeas 2017, Hayes-Conroy 2018). The proponents of this concept argue that the body is inextricably tied to territory: when the places we inhabit are violated, our bodies are affected; when our bodies are affected, the places we inhabit are violated. In honoring the body as a territory, what is prioritized by cuerpo-territorio is both the lived experiences of and the emotional attachments to place (Zaragocin and Carreta 2021, 1513). In other words, the concept of body as territory provides space to explore how the affective dimension shapes the pattern of the women's movement in Timor against extractivism. So far, there has been limited study that attempts to explain the involvement of affect in shaping the distinctive features of the women's movement in Indonesia. Accordingly, besides explaining how the concept of body as territory is traveling among Indonesia activists' circles and contextualized in the women's movement, this paper also intends to explore how the affective dimension works and shape the characteristics of the women's movement in Indonesia. By using the cuerpo-territorio in analysing the women's movement, I propose the ontological unity between bodies and territories, while affirming what Anglophone feminist, de colonial, and indigenous geographers have argued for promoting an embodied relationship to land.

Democracy-in-the-un/making?: The politics of the pro-democracy movement in Burma/Myanmar through art and the digital sphere

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Following 01 February 2021, the attempted military coup in Burma/Myanmar has uprooted much of what Burma/Myanmar has become over the last decade, including processes of state-building and the stalled peace negotiation process. Simultaneously, a vivid, strong, and creative pro-democracy movement has emerged with calls for unity that had long been

unthinkable including during the previous NLD-led government. This has included for previously less visible voices of women, the LGBTQI+ community, ethnic nationalities, and the GenZ amongst others to move to the center stage of protests both on-site and online. Within the joint goals of overthrowing the SAC and the making of a democratic future, multiple imaginaries arise based in the complex, historically-grounded socio-political mosaic of Burma/Myanmar.

Taking a qualitative content analysis of protest art and digital activism (i.e. hashtag activism/feminism as #SistersToSisters) as an entry point, this paper traces the current critical crossroad of imagining and negotiating the terms of a future federal democratic Burma/Myanmar from an intersectional feminism approach. This includes illuminating the potential to genuinely destabilize institutions of power from within through a “democracy-in-the-making” from below vis-à-vis a return to a hegemonically-dominated, depoliticized future. Moreover, while

feminist contributions already emphasize the important gender dimension in past, present, and future socio political imagining, I aim to further this by unpacking to what extent the intersectional-grounded credo of “solidarity, not sameness, [being] essential” holds true both within the country and beyond (e.g. #MilkTeaAlliance vs. ASEAN).

Problematizing English textbooks through a gender lens: A progressive movement for English curriculums in Thai higher education

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A prominent group of students joined the 2020 youth movement, showing up on the streets of Bangkok to demand gender rights reform of what they called ‘outdated’ and ‘discriminatory’ curriculum (Kuhakan, 2020). The students were reportedly referring to social studies and health education curricula, for which textbooks are authored by Thais and published in the Thai language. Meanwhile, such student groups have yet to critique English language textbooks or curriculum. Given that English language is a compulsory subject for Thai students, teachers rely heavily on commercial textbooks from American and British

publishers. As an English teacher in Thailand, I assert that a false concept of gender inclusion has led many of us to overlook heteronormativity in these English textbooks, politically and culturally imposed by the west. This study thus aims to investigate the critical consciousness (Freire, 2005) of Thai teachers teaching English as a subject in higher educational contexts. Six Thai teachers with diverse sexual identities from three public universities in Northeast Thailand will assess the contents of the English textbooks used in their classes by applying a taxonomy of representational heteronormativity (Moore, 2020) as a conceptual framework through a gender lens. The assessment will be followed by semi-structured interviews to gain further insights regarding their findings. This study is a qualitative inquiry in which the results will be informed by emerging data. It is hoped that the findings will facilitate further understanding among Thai teachers of English about critical education and the praxis of democratic participation. Teachers hold the responsibility of being change agents for brave young voices seeking a true democracy for the country of Thailand, as democracy would create a foundation for fulfilling human rights at the intersection of diverse social and cultural identities.

Resistance through mothering under the Philippine “War on Drugs”

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While several studies have problematized the popular support for President Rodrigo Duterte’s brutal “war on drugs,” this study sheds light on the mother-led and mother-based community initiatives which emerged as a response to the state-sanctioned extra-judicial killings (EJK). This research examines the role of motherhood in the formation of the political and moral agency of grandmothers, mothers, and widows whose loved ones have been victims of Oplan Tokhang, the administration’s flagship anti-drugs program. In doing so, four civil society initiatives are highlighted: the night watch of Ronda ng Kababaihan, the legal support of Rise Up for Life and for Rights, the livelihood programs of Project Support for Orphans and Widows (SOW), and the psychosocial rehabilitation offered by Baigani, all of which are directed towards the protection of families of EJK victims and communities. By analyzing the mothers’ stories of resistance through digital ethnography, this research posits that motherhood has served as a liberating force in the face of state attacks against women,

their families, and homes. Furthermore, this study attempts to argue the transformation of mothering and the collectivization of care work from the emergence of the motherist movements—a reaction to the crisis of care exacerbated by the gendered impact of the Philippine drug war. This study also seeks to contribute to the literature surrounding the complex relationship involving feminism and motherhood by emphasizing the reconciliation between the conservative nature and radical potential of motherhood, as exemplified in the mobilization of mothers for justice and human rights in the cultural context of the Philippines, marked with unequal power relations among genders and class and its underlying personalist and clientelist sociopolitical structure.

The Changing Role of Women movements in 2021 coup: From being subservient to the national movements to the independent fighters

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In colonial Burma, because Burman women had rights to argue in court, own property and dominate the petty trade, it seems that they were more independent when compared with Indian women. However, this independence is pictured by the British colonial archives, which is the product of the masculine state originally. In fact, their rights to use state power and participate in politics were excluded. Furthermore, the relationship between feminism and nationalism is ambiguous. That to say, the women's movements during the colonial period are depicted as the part of nationalism, which silent the Burman women's voice itself, especially when the female was supposed to be the supporters of ethnic or national business naturally. Aung San Suu Kyi, a woman with higher levels of education, steps into public views officially, which deepens the stereotypes on Burmese women who have high rights in society. However, this article argues that it is not representative of most women in Myanmar, and it disguises the women's actual position in culture, politics and society. Instead, actions on the military coups in 2021, taken by Burmese women, show the changes in feminism in Myanmar. Such as, the female officials refused to work under the military government and used Longyi to protest the coup, which shows Burmese women's movement came to the political stage in an independent role instead of being affiliated with national movements.

Gendered Labor Activism in Vietnam– Narratives of Morality and Care during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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This paper analyzes discourses on care work, gender norms, and morality in the context of labor activism during the COVID-19 pandemic in Vietnam. Over the course of the pandemic, there was an increase in demands made by the state of its citizens. Especially the working class was called on to support the state in ‘caring’ for the nation by continuing industrial manufacturing and service provision. Extensive school closures increased care work, which women were called on to provide by invoking narratives of morality based on prevailing gender norms. Hence, workers and women were seen by the government and the public as essential service providers. This paper discusses how these changes affected public discourses on gender equality, women’s perspectives on care work, and grassroots labor activism.

To engage with these questions, this paper collects incidents of workers’ strikes in the manufacturing sector and gig economy during the pandemic in Vietnam. These incidents are then analyzed regarding grievances, strategies and demands. This paper finds that in recent labor protests workers have begun to adopt state narratives of morality and care to demand protection and support, referencing the state’s self-proclaimed role as protector of the nation. Factory workers demanded the implementation of COVID-19 prevention measures. Motorbike taxi drivers demanded an improved regulation of the digital platform economy to protect workers. This paper argues that these recent strikes constitute a shift in labor activism. The essential role of workers during the pandemic has increased their bargaining power. Perspectives on the role of services and care work are changing. By linking workers’ rights issues to discussions on care provision, there is an opportunity for addressing broader questions of gender equality and social cohesion in Vietnamese society.

Pesantren Waria Al-Fattah Yogyakarta: A Place Transgender Muslim Group Refashioning Themselves

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This article aims to explore the relationship between Islam, Pesantren (Islamic boarding school) and the issue of transgender groups in the Muslim society. This anthropological-sociological research uses ethnographic methods with a focus on fieldwork case studies at Pesantren Al-Fattah Kotagede, Yogyakarta. This paper focuses on how the transgender Muslim group refashioning their social and religious identity through their engagement with Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School). The argument of this paper is try to re-examine the function of pesantren which is basically an Islamic educational institution transformed into an institution which protects the transgender minority group in expressing their religious expression. At first glance, the curriculum offered by this pesantren is not quite different from pesantren in Indonesia in general, such as the lesson of the Qur'an, hadith, fiqh, tauhid, akhlak and basic Islamic sciences in general. However, in addition to the basic Islamic sciences, the transgender students (santri waria) in this institution are also involved in gender classes and other social activities with the aim of refashioning the identity of transgender Muslim groups around Muslim communities in Indonesia. Taking the example of Pesantren Waria Al-Fattah Yogyakarta, this article shows the social transformation initiated by the pesantren as an Islamic educational institution in forming a new model in religious expressions.

TBC

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This study examines the importance of traditional beliefs and ancient rituals in Myanmar's politics from 1990 to 2010. It consists of arguments regarding the use of ancient rituals in contesting legitimacy between the authoritarian regime and political actors. Following the demise of the socialist government, the Myanmar military (Tatmadaw) sought a new ideology to fill the ideological vacuum created by the collapse of the socialist government, in which

Buddhism and old rituals played a critical part in establishing traditional legitimacy. On the other hand, the political stakeholders also use ancient rituals to mobilize and deliver their political message to their supporters to contest the legality of the military. This political struggle has elevated Buddhist monastic orders to a critical and contentious role in politics, serving as moral guides, mediating agencies, and initiators of political movements and civil society centered around the ancient rituals. Although studies on Buddhism and society and Myanmar politics have increased over the past decade, the use of ancient rituals for legitimacy building and developing the ideology and contesting the regime is largely overlooked. The everyday practice of Buddhism is not homogeneous itself but integrated with the rituals and beliefs which are often utilized by political actors. This form of everyday Buddhism with the mix of ancient rituals is overlooked as it's beyond Buddhism's conventional interpretation and study. This research aims to fill this void by examining two sets of previously overlooked prominent Burmese publication outlets: military propaganda and mystical magazines. Additionally, mystical periodicals (ganbiya magazines) will be analyzed to understand better how the populace consumed and utilized such traditional knowledge, to contest the legitimacy of the authoritarian regime and develop a civil society centered around mystical subject matters.

Multimodal Inventions: Social Movement Knowledge Practices of Transnational Rohingya Youth

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Drawing on a collaborative ethnographic research project with transnational networks of Rohingya youth, this paper foregrounds the digital and creative labor these actors are involved in to build social movements through multimodal practices. In doing so these actors intervene in contemporary crises of genocide, protracted forced-migration, and COVID-19. These networks, I argue, are crucial in not only getting to grips with forces that confound them, but vital in spreading information across displacement-affected networks. These creative practices generate films, poems, photography exhibitions, and an array of multimodal creations that exemplify the agency of these creative networks to mobilize social

movements and display the complex and nuanced ways in which they engage with the world around them.

The ethnography I present is formed from my role as an ethnographer, visual artist, and anthropologist, collaborating with my participants through multimodal methods, participatory youth cinema, graphic ethnography, photography, ethnofiction, and collaborative social media activism. Collaborations in digital media practice with transnational youth undertaken during my engagements with communities in Burma and those seeking refuge in Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Europe, engage with the past and present in order to (re)imagine futures. It is vital to reflect critically on any collaboration, with the actors I engaged with ethical considerations were not merely additives to a project but were at the heart of it. In the wake of the ongoing military coup in Burma signs of intercommunal support have emerged on the streets of Yangon and on social media; there are many bridges connecting knowledge practices that are yet-to-be between intersecting social movements in Burma and this paper seeks to ethically explore the basis for those connections.

Free Funeral Service Societies as a Buddhist Social Welfare Movement in Contemporary Myanmar

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This paper examines how Buddhist soteriology intersects the ethical dynamics of social welfare movement in contemporary Myanmar. Since the late 1990s, Myanmar has seen the rapid growth of Free Funeral Service Societies (FFSSs), which are lay Buddhist relief organizations dedicated

to welfare provision and disaster relief. These charitable organizations emerged initially to address rising funerary costs and have since grown into a grassroots movement with an emphasis on ‘the welfare of others’ (parahita). In present-day Myanmar, FFSSs are a pivotal force in disaster relief and campaigns against state-sponsored violence, including the current fight against the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-present) and the military coup (2021-present). FFSSs, moreover, have become a new locus of religious change. “One trip to the cemetery, ten trips to the monastery” is a Burmese proverb that reveals the surging popular interest in FFSSs as Buddhist institutions are tantamount to monasteries.

The rising social, political, and religious significance of FFSSs has led scholars of Myanmar and Theravada Buddhism to examine how Buddhism informs the development of civil society. This paper contributes to this scholarship by showing how FFSSs constructed death into a location where the free funeral service is understood to be Buddhist practices to address concerns with welfare of others, good deeds, and the pursuit of good death and better conditions of rebirth. It shows how the development of FFSSs links Buddhist soteriology with relief work and in doing so, has had a profound effect on collective response to suffering and redefined what it means to live an ethical life in contemporary Myanmar.

Young Buddhists, Javanese Buddhists.

Reverse migration and religious entrepreneurialism in mountain Java.

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The paper investigates the emergence of a youth organization in rural Central Java and its relevance for the channeling of Buddhist revivalist stances in the wider Temanggung area. Buddhism was introduced in the Muslim-majority regency in the 1950s through the lens of “revival”. However, in recent decades, the religious demographics as well as attendance to formal religious worship has been oftentimes framed by local religious actors as being in a long-term state of decadence and abandonment, particularly on the side of young residents. This is perceived to be to the advantage of either other formal religious affiliations (Islam, Christianity) or a more generalised trend of indifference towards communal forms of engagement.

The article follows the formation of the Pemuda Buddhis (the Buddhist Youth) group in the Temanggung highlands and the social-cultural ramifications that converge in its origination, practices and agenda. Rather than instantiating a linear “return”, the Buddhist revitalisation efforts promoted by the group materialize, in fact, a novel religious scenario, marked by a sharper influence of Theravada Buddhism and, on the other hand, a mélange of ethnocultural and Javanese-identitarian stances. More specifically, the paper intends to show how the formation of the youth organization and the on-the ground activities implemented reflect wider dynamics of internal mobility as well as new economic/entrepreneurial sensibilities. It

does so through fieldwork-based ethnographic data and pre and post-fieldwork communication, observations and online ethnography.

Religion and social movements through the eyes of Buddhist novice monks in Thailand

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Among the crowds of anti-government protesters in Bangkok, it was easy to pick out the orange robes. In 2020 demonstrations swept the Thai capital in the wake of the government's decision to dissolve the Future Forward Party, who had run a campaign critical of Prayut Chan-o-cha's incumbent regime in the 2019 general election. The proposed paper will explore issues surrounding the outbreak of protests through the eyes of young novice monks. Considering the motivations of the monks who participated in the protests, I will trace the progression of youth protest movements in Thailand through recent history. I will assess this history in light of ethnographic material I gathered from 2020-2021 when conducting research at a Buddhist monastic school in a rural province of Northern Thailand. This ethnographic project focused on how novice monks learn to cultivate ethical and religious values over the course of their education. When discussing their political and ideological views I found novices often navigated complex systems of valuation, reconciling the religious concepts inculcated in them through their monastic lifestyle and schooling with the progressive political ideologies expressed by many of their generation. Through comparing the views of novices at my field-site, and the actions of protesting monks in the capital, I hope to provide insight into how the ideologies of social movements spread from urban centers to rural periphery.

The paper shall explore the literature on social movements as it has been understood within the anthropology of education (for example see Niesz 2019, Apple 2007 and Anyon 2014) alongside ideas concerning the cultivation of ethics and technologies of the self. Landmark studies from the anthropology of ethics from Laidlaw (2003) and Mahmood (2005) will provide reference points for understanding how novices develop ethical outlooks that incorporate the rhetoric of social movements alongside the religious values inherent to their monastic role.

TBC

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Cambodian Buddhist monk and activist Sovath Luon is among the three protagonists featured in a 2016 documentary film entitled *A Cambodian Spring*. Operationalized within a terrain of, what Sokphea Young termed, neopatrimonialism, Luon's activism since the late 2000s in Cambodia deployed social media and photographic methods to unearth and publicize the country's tales of injustice, land grabbing, deforestation, and ecocide. It could be argued that his monkish action inspired other saffron robes to partake in various social movements that contributed to a 2013 political transformation that witnessed a drastic decrease of parliamentary seats of the ruling party in the general election. Ever since, Cambodia's political and democratic landscape entered yet another dimension: a single-party state and neo-authoritarianism. However, as an activist, Luon is not the first Cambodian monk that committed to social movement. Others before him, since 1942, led different forms of social movement, either as a protest or peace march, to reclaim Cambodian identity and culture, reestablish order and Buddhist kingdom, and to obtain justice. However short lived these Buddhist movements may be, the monk activists were able to exercise their personal and political will in a safer environment, at least, for a certain period of time, compared to ordinary Cambodian citizens because of the religious space in which they dwell in: Buddhism. In this essay, I want to explore how social media, photography, Buddhist religious space plays a role in the success of Luon's activism and how it is different from other monkish movements since 1942.

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Partner institutions and graduate conference

The Summer School Graduate Conference is part of a [series of interlinked events on social movements in Southeast Asia](#), organized by a network of academic, research, and public institutions, including:

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