



Myanmar Europe Research Network



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The Kaleidoscope of Myanmar Transformations

International Conference

Myanmar-Europe Research Network (MYern)

Department of Cultures, Politics and Society, University of Turin

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Over the past 15 years, Myanmar has been jolted by waves of transformation. The political system was subjected to a controlled reconfiguration that led to the current power-sharing arrangement between the military and the National League for Democracy, while the economy has boomed generating opportunities in many directions but also entrenching inequalities.

In the meantime, political and economic change has intertwined with decades of ethnic antagonism and conflict. Across a landscape of complex and fractured peace processes, where protracted conflicts continue to simmer, the purge of Muslim populations from northern Rakhine State has exposed deep cultural, religious and political fault lines in ways that undermine confidence in the country's positive changes. Questions pertaining to social cohesion, authority and governance have emerged.

A spatial vocabulary has also been deployed in different fields across Myanmar studies signalling the value of the concept of space in grasping and understanding these transformations. Much attention has focussed on borderlands, urban and rural spaces, cyberspaces, mountain and

maritime borderscapes, margins and frontiers, and so on. More generally, the spatial turn in social sciences has sought to re-conceptualize centre-periphery relations by looking at socio-political differentiations of space.

Proceeding from those intellectual premises, this conference aims to collect theoretically innovative and empirically sound contributions to study the mutual relations between current Myanmar transformations and space. In particular it focuses on the social and political processes through which symbolic/identity-related and physical-material aspects of space interact.

To achieve these conceptual aims, the conference is open to various fields in social sciences – from anthropology to political science, but also with attention to economics, geography, and international relations – and welcomes interdisciplinary contributions. A non-exhaustive list of research topics includes:

- 1) The symbolic, material, and institutional production of Myanmar (and non-Myanmar) territory.
- 2) The analysis of the various scales intersecting and interacting across Myanmar's many transformations.
- 3) The role of actors, beyond and behind the state, in shaping networks of various types, including those that seek to subvert prevailing notions of space.

The Conference is organized by MYern, the Myanmar-Europe Research Network, based at the Department of Cultures, Politics and Society at the University of Turin, Italy.

Abstract proposals of no more than 250 words shall be sent to info@myern.org no later than September 8, 2019.