

Title: Gender in the Transition: Feminist Politics, Resistance and Intersectionality in Myanmar.

Conveners: Dr Jenny Hedström (Umeå University) and Dr Elisabeth Olivius (Umeå University): j.e.hedstrom@gmail.com

Single session panel.

Brief Description of Panel:

The aim of this panel is to critically examine different conceptualizations, dynamics and lived experiences of gender in Myanmar. A central question for students and scholars of gender is how gender roles are (re)produced in and connected to relations of, *inter alia*, power, class, ethnicity, and religious identity. The study of gender in historical and contemporary Myanmar then provides a unique opportunity to explore differences in the articulation and lived experience of gender across time and communities. Paying attention to this allows for the examination of how the status of women has evolved against a background of absolute exclusion during military rule to a semi-civilian government with a female de-facto head of state. Despite this shift, gender inequality persists across the country at all levels. Why is this, and how are feminist or women's movements mobilising to confront the inequalities they experience? What can students of contemporary Myanmar learn from the ways in which gender has been mobilised for political purposes in the past?

Some of the questions raised in this panel include:

- What sort of gender roles are being (re)defined or (re)instated in the transition? In what ways have gender roles been bent, utilized, or changed in the past, and for what purposes?
- How have notions of feminism evolved and been employed in Myanmar by women and queer/LGBTI activists? How is feminist resistance organized against militaristic modes that reinstate and reinforce relations of inequality? What spaces are afforded non-heteronormative activists?
- How are new or redefined norms and regulations affecting feminist, intersectional and queer work for political participation and equality?
- How are non-normative identities reconfigured through migration, displacement or diasporic activities?
- How is sexuality and gendered roles regulated at home and in war? What are the gendered effects of war, ceasefire dynamics and development processes in Myanmar?