

***Title: Border governance in Myanmar: contested and plural political spaces***

*Conveners:* Helene Maria Kyed and Kirsten McConnachie

*Panel description:*

In Southeast Asia borders and bordering processes are central to politics and the governance of people, goods and territories; not only as markers of territorial-administrative control but also as practices that shape dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, mobility/immobility, and relations of power and authority. In this panel we introduce the concept of 'border governance' to discuss the multiplex practices and modes of governance that co-exist and often compete in the ethnic states of Myanmar, bordering Bangladesh, China, India, Thailand and Laos. These borderlands have a long history of ethno-nationalist conflict and the internal borders of these areas in relation to the centre have been extremely influential in shaping the country's political history and particularly its decades of structural discrimination, violence and persecution of minority ethnic groups. Papers on the panel will explore border governance through the lens of migration, local orders, political exclusion, and (if Helene presents) competing state-making processes.

*Presenters:*

Myat Thet Thitsar, Enlightened Myanmar Research Foundation (EMReF), 'Local orders and exclusion in Rakhine State'

Ardeth Thawngmung, 'Internal Migration in border areas'

Michael Lidauer, 'Election cancellations in ethnic border states'

Kirsten McConnachie, "Refugee Policy as Border Governance: Refugee return, peacebuilding and Myanmar's politics of transition"

*Discussant:* Helene M. Kyed