**Joint book launch: Contentious state-society relations in Myanmar**

**Convenors:** Maaike Matelski (VU - m.matelski@vu.nl) and Gerard McCarthy (ISS/EUR – mccarthy@iss.nl)

**Format:** Book forum

In this ‘Authors Meet Critics’ roundtable, discussants will give their perspectives on two recently released books focused on contention, cooperation and co-optation in Myanmar state-society relations.

The panel focuses on historical evolution and contemporary dynamics of state-society relations in Myanmar, including since the 2021 military coup. Grounded in long-term and extensive fieldwork, both books grapple with the role of ethno-communal identity in creating a basis for inclusion or exclusion from civil society, strategies of manoeuvre and collective action under autocratic rule, along with the impact of market reform and the role of foreign aid in shaping the politics of contestation.

The panel will be of interest both to Myanmar and SE Asia civil society and governance specialists.

Books to be discussed:

* Gerard McCarthy, 2023, Outsourcing the Polity: Non-State Welfare, Inequality and Resistance in Myanmar, Cornell University Press.
* Maaike Matelski, 2024, Contested Civil Society in Myanmar: Local Change and Global Recognition, Bristol University Press.

We invite others interested in presenting or serving as discussants to express their interest.