

Myanmar Quests for Social Justice

Myanmar Conference, 05 – 07 June 2025

Hosted by Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, co-organized with Myanmar-Institut e.V.

Myanmar has a long history of armed conflict and political repression, culminating in the 2021 military coup and its violent aftermath. Discussions about social justice and desired futures precede the latest coup, and can be traced back to at least the colonial independence struggle. While the various struggles against centralized and authoritarian rule have had a lasting impact to this day, quests for justice have diversified. Over four years since the latest coup, those fighting for social justice now face unprecedented repression and a nearly complete closing of civic space. Yet, they also critique unequal power structures across generations. Debates on strategies and future directions continue to intensify within the struggle against the military, and human rights violations pose a serious risk across the board in post-coup Myanmar. As Myanmar's resistance continues to be critiqued from within and external support is waning, this conference invites critical engagements with different actors' struggles for social justice and their complexities in Myanmar.

Conference details - Amsterdam

The conference committee invites contributions from academics, researchers, graduate students and professionals engaging Myanmar quests for social justice. While we hope for many contributions relating to this year's theme, we will also try to accommodate papers that fall outside the direct conference theme. The conference will start with an opening night on Thursday 5 June, and continue with panels on Friday 6 and Saturday 7 June in Amsterdam.

PhD workshop 5 June - The Hague

An optional workshop for (aspiring) PhD students from and/or working on Myanmar will be offered at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague on Thursday 5 June in the afternoon. Please indicate in your application if you are interested to participate in this workshop. Participation in the workshop and the conference will be free of charge.

Paper submissions

To contribute, please submit an abstract in English of up to 200 words as well as a brief biographical note by 15th April 2025 to:

Maaïke Matelski (VU Amsterdam), Mandy Fox & Benedict Mette-Starke (Myanmar Institut)
Email: conference@myanmar-institut.org

We will send notifications of acceptance by early May. Please note accommodation in Amsterdam is extremely scarce, and we encourage you to arrange your bookings in or near Amsterdam (e.g. Hoofddorp, Leiden, Haarlem) as soon as possible. A limited number of rooms (mostly with shared bathroom) have been secured in Amstelveen for a reduced rate of 75 euro per night. These will be allocated on a first-come-first-serve basis for low income participants. Unfortunately the organisers cannot offer any financial assistance to conference participants.