



# Shaping Asia

## **The Secretariat of Yangon (Myanmar)** **An Overdetermined Mournument and the** **Difficulties of National Heritage**

**Dr. Felix Girke**

Universität Konstanz, Germany

Thursday, 25 Nov. 2021

10:15–11:45 (CET)

Zoom event

Many historical events are linked to the so-called Secretariat compound in Yangon's downtown, including the independence ceremony with the final lowering of the Union Jack in early 1948. But the incisive events of July 19, 1947, overdetermine other potential significations of the Secretariat: inside, in the formative moment of the budding nation, Aung San, face of the military resistance against British and Japanese and Prime Minister to be, was killed alongside several of his cabinet members. July 19 became Burma's (later: Myanmar's) "Martyrs' Day", and people mourn the young national leader, wondering what might have been had he but lived. This presentation – based on a draft paper by Jayde Lin Roberts and Felix Girke – explores the central role of this iconic building complex in the national imagery and the efforts by a collection of stakeholders between 2013 and 2021 to establish a new heritage regime for Yangon and the nation.

**Dr. Felix Girke** received his PhD in anthropology from the University of Halle-Wittenberg in 2009. He works as coordinator for internationalisation programs at HTWG Konstanz - University of Applied Sciences. He has done research among the Kara of Ethiopia's Lower Omo Valley from 2003 to 2009, and in urban Myanmar since 2009; currently, he is part of a trinational research team working on the nexus of immobility and intangible heritage in the Lake Constance region. His monograph "The Wheel of Autonomy" appeared in 2018; he has also (co-)edited four books. Since 2018, he has been a member of the editorial collective of Allegra Lab.

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**Zoom registration Link:**

[https://uni-bielefeld.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMvc-yhqjsoE9atuLhIWv\\_9KbowsKVu5SDL](https://uni-bielefeld.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMvc-yhqjsoE9atuLhIWv_9KbowsKVu5SDL)