

MAI VAN TRAN
+45 35 32 69 13 | vantran@nias.ku.dk

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN

2022 – Present

Postdoctoral Researcher, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Department of Political Science

EDUCATION

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Ph.D. & M.A., Government

Dec 2020

Subfields: Comparative Politics, Methodology

Dissertation: *Resilience of Contentious Movements under Repression: The Role of Bystander Protection and Disruption*

Committee: Thomas Pepinsky (Chair), Nicolas van de Walle, Matthew Evangelista, Jeremy Wallace

WESLEYAN COLLEGE

B.A., International Relations & Economics. *Summa Cum Laude.*

May 2012

PUBLICATIONS

Peer Reviewed

2022. “Democratic backsliding disrupted: The role of digitalized resistance in Myanmar.” *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics*. (with Megan Ryan)

Accepted. “Provoking civilian disruption against popular protests: The role of counter-mobilisation strategies by the Myanmar military.” *Journal of Contemporary Asia*.

Accepted. “Enabling activist resilience: Bystander protection during protest crackdowns in Myanmar.” *Asian Politics & Policy*.

Under Review

“Organic online politics: Farmers, Facebook and Myanmar’s military coup” (with Dr. Hilary Faxon, Kendra Kintzi, Swan Ye Htut, and Jasper)

Public Scholarship

Book chapter

2022. “Pro-democracy struggle in the age of social media: Evolution of military and resistance strategies in post-coup Myanmar.” In *Myanmar after the Coup: Resistance, Resilience, and Re-invention*.

Giuseppe Gabusi and Raimondo Neironi (Eds.). Turin: Torino World Affairs Institute. (with Megan Ryan)

Blog posts

2022. “Digital Contention in Post-Coup Myanmar.” *New Mandala*. (with Megan Ryan)

2021. “Myanmar’s Military Has a History of Using Deceptive Tactics against Protesters. Now It Has Social Media, Too.” *The Washington Post*.

2021. “To Understand Post-Coup Myanmar, Look to Its History of Popular Resistance, Not Sanctions.” *The Brookings Institution*.

2013. “Understanding Malaysia’s Pivotal General Election.” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. (with Vikram Nehru)

2012. "Building Peace in Southeast Asia's Conflict Areas." *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. (with Vikram Nehru)

2012. "More Hills to Climb for Aung San Suu Kyi." *East Asia Forum*. (with Vikram Nehru)

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Work in progress

Bystanders to the Rescue: Resilience of Mass Contention under Myanmar's Military Rule. Monograph in preparation.

"Strange bedfellows or genuine comrades? Variation in digital solidarity among Myanmar's revolutionaries" (with Megan Ryan). Working paper.

Research trips

Myanmar: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

AWARDS AND PRIZES

<i>Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions Postdoctoral Fellow</i> , European Commission	2022
<i>SEAREG Fellow</i> , Southeast Asia Research Group	2022
<i>Best Paper Award</i> , Young International Scholars Category, Myanmar-Europe Research Network's International Conference	2022
<i>Myanmar Fellow</i> , University of British Columbia - IDRC	2021
<i>Asia Workshop's Fellow</i> , American Political Science Association	2019
<i>President Scholar</i> , Wesleyan College	2009-2012

PRESENTATIONS

Invited Presentations

"Democratic Backsliding Disrupted: The Role of Digitalized Resistance in Myanmar." Myanmar Research Centre Dialogue Series. Australian National University. November 2022.

"Bystanders, Digital Activism, and Revolution Solidarity in Myanmar's Democratic Struggles." Myanmar University of Social Science and Technology. November 2022.

Roundtable Discussion: How to Study Pro-Democracy Movements in Asia. V-Dem East Asia Regional Centre Webminar. January 2022.

"Pro-Democracy Struggle in the Digital Age? Military vs. Dissident Rhetoric in Post-Coup Myanmar." Burma (Myanmar) Country Seminar. Cornell University. December 2021.

"Myanmar's Anti-Coup Resistance: Dynamics and Dilemmas in the Digital Age." Department of Southeast Asian Studies Seminars. National University of Singapore. October 2021.

"Engineering Public Hostility Against Popular Movements: Tatmadaw's Suppressive Repertoire in Urban Myanmar." Center for Southeast Asian Studies Brown Bag Seminar Series. Yale University. September 2021.

"Uncharted Territory: Fieldwork Methods and Ethics in Myanmar." Institute for International and Area Studies. Tsinghua University. May 2021.

"Reflections on Myanmar's Pro-Democracy Movement." Panel Discussion on The Myanmar Coup: Causes, Popular Resistance, and International Intervention. University of Chicago. May 2021.

"Myanmar Social Media Research: Ethics in Practice." Workshop on Digital Methods in Post-Coup Myanmar. National University of Singapore. May 2021.

“Activist Resilience under Repression: The Role of Civilian Protection in the Burmese Pro-Democracy Movement.” Southeast Asia Program Lecture Series. Cornell University. March 2021.

“Update on Myanmar’s Digital Cultures: Myths and Facts.” Myanmar Digital Rights Forum. February 2020.

Conference Presentations

Danish Political Science Association’s Annual Meeting	2022
German Association of Peace and Conflict Studies’ Workshop	2022
Nordic NIAS Council’s Generation Asia Conference	2022
Southeast Asia Research Group’s Summer Conference	2022
European Association for Southeast Asian Studies Conference	2022
Norwegian Network for Asian Studies’s Asianet Conference	2022
Social Movement in Comparative Perspective Workshop by University of Copenhagen	2022
Myanmar-Europe Research Network (MyERN) International Conference	2022
Democratic Backsliding in Southeast Asia Special Issue Workshop	2021
Canadian Council for Southeast Asian Studies Conference	2021
American Political Science Association Annual Meeting	2021
Beyond Essentialism: Workshop by University of Essex-University of the Philippines, Diliman	2021
Association for Asian Studies Conference	2021
American Political Science Association’s Asia Workshop	2019
Tsinghua University’s Area Studies Forum	2019
Cornell-Stockholm PhD Conference	2017
Midwest Political Science Association	2017
International Burma Studies Conference at Northern Illinois University	2016
Burma/Myanmar Research Forum at Cornell University	2015

GRANTS

“Pro-Democracy Platform Advocacy: Fostering Social Media's Accountability to Dissident Voices under Authoritarianism.” European Commission’s Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Postdoctoral Fellowship. EUR 191,760. September 2023 – August 2025.

“Facilitating the next generation of Burmese scholars: Research mentorship on contentious politics.” Women in Southeast Asian Social Sciences’ collaborative grant. USD 1,000. August – November 2022. (with Dr. Terese Gagnon)

“Democratic backsliding disrupted: The role of digitalized resistance in Myanmar.” Suntory Foundation’s research grant. USD 800. February 2022. (with Megan Ryan)

University of British Columbia - International Development Research Centre’s Myanmar Fellowship. USD 2,000. October 2021.

“Digital Literacy, Demographics and Misinformation in Myanmar Research.” Facebook’s Foundational Integrity research grant. USD 99,960. September 2020 – December 2021. (with Dr. Hilary Faxon)

“Studying Myanmar military’s political narratives on its 2021 coup.” APSA Asia Workshop Alumni Professional Development Grant. USD 1,000. November 2019.

“Resilience of Contentious Movements under Repression: The Role of Bystander Protection and Disruption.” Cornell University’s Sage Fellowship’s Dissertation Write-up Grant. USD 58,758. January – December 2019.

“Resilience of Contentious Movements under Repression: The Role of Bystander Protection and Disruption.” Cornell University’s Thak Chaloeintiarana Summer Dissertation Write-up Grant. USD 2,500. June – August 2019.

“Building Backlash Against Authoritarianism: Case Studies on Myanmar’s Than Shwe Dictatorship.” Cornell University’s Government Department’s Summer Supplemental Support. USD 1,600. June – August 2017.

“Authoritarian Legacies and Voting Behavior in Myanmar’s 2015 Elections.” Cornell University’s Graduate School Travel Grant. USD 2,000. December 2016.

“Variation in Ethno-Nationalist Violence during Democratic Transition in Burma.” Cornell University’s Southeast Asia Program’s Research Travel Award. USD 2,000. January 2015.

“Variation in Ethno-Nationalist Violence during Democratic Transition in Burma.” Cornell University’s Einaudi Center’s Research Travel Grant. USD 2,000. June – August 2015.

SKILLS

SOFTWARE: STATA, ATLAS.ti

LANGUAGES: English (fluent), Burmese (advanced), Mandarin Chinese (intermediate), Vietnamese (native)

TEACHING & MENTORING EXPERIENCE

Fall 2022- Present	DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN <i>Instructor</i> Challenging Authoritarianism: Politics of Protest in East and Southeast Asia
Spring 2022- Present	NORDIC INSTITUTE OF ASIAN STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN <i>SUPRA Program Mentor</i> One-on-one mentorship for MA/PhD students studying Asia
Fall 2021	INYA INSTITUTE, YANGON, MYANMAR <i>Instructor</i> Academic Writing in the Social Sciences
Fall 2015- Fall 2018	DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT, CORNELL UNIVERSITY <i>Teaching Assistant</i> Introduction to Comparative Politics, Introduction to American Politics, Human Rights at War, China’s New Economy, Politics of Poverty in the U.S.
Winter 2017- Spring 2018	YANGON SCHOOL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, YANGON, MYANMAR <i>Instructor</i> Introduction to Comparative Politics & Politics of Development

SERVICE

June 2021- Present	VIRTUAL FEDERAL UNIVERSITY, MYANMAR <i>Course Content Reviewer</i>
Fall 2022	RESEARCH MENTORSHIP ON CONTENTIOUS POLITICS FOR BURMESE SCHOLARS <i>Organizer & Mentor</i>

May 2016- SOUTHEAST ASIA PROGRAM, CORNELL UNIVERSITY
May 2017 *Co-Chair, Graduate Student Committee*