Citizenship in Myanmar
The ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute (formerly Institute of Southeast Asian Studies) is an autonomous organization established in 1968. It is a regional centre dedicated to the study of socio-political, security, and economic trends and developments in Southeast Asia and its wider geostrategic and economic environment. The Institute’s research programmes are grouped under Regional Economic Studies (RES), Regional Strategic and Political Studies (RSPS), and Regional Social and Cultural Studies (RSCS). The Institute is also home to the ASEAN Studies Centre (ASC), the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre (NSC) and the Singapore APEC Study Centre.

ISEAS Publishing, an established academic press, has issued more than 2,000 books and journals. It is the largest scholarly publisher of research about Southeast Asia from within the region. ISEAS Publishing works with many other academic and trade publishers and distributors to disseminate important research and analyses from and about Southeast Asia to the rest of the world.
Citizenship in Myanmar

Ways of Being in and from Burma

EDITED BY
ASHLEY SOUTH
MARIE LALL
to Bellay and Viren, who put up
with our long absences
CONTENTS

Foreword ix
The Contributors x
Map of Myanmar xii

Introduction
Ashley South and Marie Lall 1

1. Ethnic Politics and Citizenship in History
   Martin Smith 26

2. Representation and Citizenship in the Future Integration of
   Ethnic Armed Actors in Myanmar/Burma
   Helene Maria Kyed and Mikael Gravers 59

Special Contribution: The Way Forward for Peace, Stability and
Progress in Burma/Myanmar, by Nai Hongsa 87

   in Myanmar
   Matthew J. Walton 95

4. Citizenship and Minority Rights: The Role of “National Race
   Affairs” Ministers in Myanmar’s 2008 Constitution
   Ardeth Maung Thawnhmung and Yadana 113

Special Contribution: Karenni People at a Glance, by Khu Oo Reh 140

5. Myanmar’s Youth and the Question of Citizenship
   Marie Lall 145

Special Contribution: I Am a Citizen of Myanmar, by Aung Naing Oo 161

   Legibility in Provincial Myanmar
   Gerard McCarthy 167
Special Contribution: How I Became Shan, by Sai Kheunsai 188

7. Conflict and Mass Violence in Arakan (Rakine State):
The 1942 Events and Political Identity Formation
Jacques P. Leider 193

8. Exploring the Issue of Citizenship in Rakhine State
Derek Tonkin 222

Special Contribution: Rohingya and Nationality Status in Myanmar,
by Nurul Islam 264

9. Myanmar’s Other Muslims: The Case of the Kaman
Nyi Nyi Kyaw 279

Special Contribution: Interview with P’doh Kweh Htoo Win 301

Index 305
FOREWORD

Most of the chapters in Citizenship in Myanmar: Ways of Being in and from Burma are based on papers presented at a July 2015 conference on “Burma/Myanmar in Transition: Connectivity, Changes and Challenges” held at Chiang Mai University. Additional special contributions come from six community and political leaders from Myanmar, including senior officials of Ethnic Armed Organizations.

Until recently, Myanmar studies focused primarily on democracy and human rights. With the election in 2010, the government embarked on a series of reforms to direct the country towards liberal democracy, a mixed economy, and reconciliation, although doubts persist about the motives that underpin such reforms. This has led to a new democratic system, ethnic ceasefire talks, and the victory of the National League for Democracy (NLD) in 2012. These changes have ushered in a turning point in Myanmar studies — with the focus shifting to how the liberal government will deal with both the country’s past as well as the present challenges of representation and the meaning of Myanmar citizenship and national identity for the various ethnic groups in Myanmar. This book examines the practices of citizenship and the role of state and civil society in the linkages between culture, religion, speech, access to land and, most importantly, access to opportunities. The government faces major challenges in trying to unite the various ethnic and religious groups in Myanmar behind its reformist agenda.

The research included here has examined the practices of citizenship in its various aspects — including educational, cultural, religious and ethnic — to investigate whether citizenship is a political instrument for national reform or a representation of national identity. I hope this book leads to a better understanding of our neighbour, including its sociopolitical transition and the implications for regional development — and helps us to further our cooperation with Myanmar.

Associate Professor Sampan Singharajwarapan, PhD
Vice-President, Chiang Mai University
CONTRIBUTORS

Ardeth Maung Thawnhmung, Chair of the Political Science Department, University of Massachusetts at Lowell, USA.

Aung Naing Oo, a political analyst and previously leading member of the Myanmar Peace Centre.

Mikael Gravers, Associate Professor, Anthropology, Aarhus University, Denmark.

Khu Oo Reh, Vice-Chairman of the Karenni National Progressive Party.

Helene Maria Kyed, Research Fellow at the Danish Institute of International Studies, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Marie Lall, Professor of Education and South Asian Studies, Institute of Education, University College London, UK.

Jacques P. Leider, École française d’Extrême-Orient, Bangkok and Yangon.

Gerard McCarthy, Ph.D. candidate at the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.

Nai Hongsa, Vice-Chairman of the New Mon State Party.

Nurul Islam, Chairman of the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation.

Nyi Nyi Kyaw, Postdoctoral Fellow at Centre for Asian Legal Studies at the Faculty of Law at the National University of Singapore.

P’doh Kweh Htoo Win, General Secretary of the Karen National Union.

Sai Kheunsai, the founder and editor of the Shan Herald Agency for News.

Martin Smith, an independent author and consultant.
Contributors

Ashley South, independent researcher, policy analyst and consultant in Southeast Asia; Research Fellow at the Centre for Ethnic Studies and Development, Chiang Mai University.

Derek Tonkin, former British Ambassador to Thailand, Vietnam and Laos.

Matthew J. Walton, Aung San Suu Kyi Senior Research Fellow, St Antony’s College, Oxford University, UK.

Yadana, Director of Braveheart Foundation, Yangon.