

CSEAS Special Seminar

# THE HERMENEUTICS OF TORTURE IN THAILAND



CSEAS WEB  
ACCESS

11 June 2024, Tuesday

15:30-17:00 (JST)

Format; In-person

**Tonantei (Room 201)**

Inamori Foundation Memorial Building, Kyoto University

## ABSTRACT

How do states whose officers torture grapple with whether and how to document and articulate the practice? Why does how they do that matter? This talk addresses these questions via records of torture rendered by cops, lawyers, administrators, prosecutors and judges in Thailand, obtained between 2018 and 2023. In these, state officers unevenly reflect on violence and its role in statecraft. They communicate about torture, and they interpret it. By giving meaning to this type of state violence, they make the state meaningful. Though torture might itself be arbitrary and stupid, and lacking in interpretive depth, its shallowness and stupidity calls for, and make possible, the hermeneutics to come.

## PRESENTER



**Dr. Nick Cheesman**

Associate Professor, Australian National University

Nick Cheesman is a Fellow in the Department of Political and Social Change, Australian National University. From July to September 2019 he was a Visiting Research Scholar at CSEAS. From October to December he is a Guest Scholar at the Center and a Project Researcher at Ritsumeikan University. His current research is on torture. In 2019 he has published on impunity, authority and courts in Myanmar, in *Human Rights Quarterly*, *Sojourn*, and *History and Anthropology*. He co-edits the Southeast Asia Publications Series for NUS Press, and co-hosts the New Books in Southeast Asian Studies channel of the New Books Network.