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Photo by Frédéric Morin-Gagnon, Hanoi.

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PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Our CCSEAS Conference

It is with great pleasure that I pen my first note as president of CCSEAS. Let me first start off by thanking Abidin Kusno for his excellent leadership of CCSEAS in the past two years. Under his leadership CCSEAS has now established a permanent secretariat at the York Centre for Asian Research at York University, and has also developed a more extensive website. Abidin has also strengthened links between CCSEAS and Global Affairs Canada, ensuring that our organization will have continuous intellectual and policy dialogue with Ottawa.

As president of CCSEAS, I am especially eager to advance three goals. First, I would like to encourage more graduate students to join CCSEAS. With the demise of CASA (Canadian Area Studies Association), CCSEAS represents the only major organization in Canada focused on Southeast Asian Studies, as well as Asian Studies. It is therefore an excellent organization for graduate students in Canada to engage with. In particular, CCSEAS's biennial conference provides an ideal venue for students to present their research in a welcoming and supportive environment. The biennial conference also facilitates significant opportunity to meet other students and scholars with common interests. Second, I believe it is important for CCSEAS to continue to engage with the policy realm through further dialogue with Global Affairs, NGOs, and other government and civil society institutions. As the premier organization on Southeast Asian Studies in Canada, CCSEAS should have wide reach beyond the academy and should speak to the current issues that Southeast Asia faces, including the plight of the Rohingya, rising illiberalism, and military dictatorship. Third, given the fact that CCSEAS is now the only Asian Studies organization in Canada, it would be important for CCSEAS to extend dialogue toward other Asian regions, such as Northeast Asia and South Asia. At our biennial conference, panels that address Northeast Asia and South Asia should also be encouraged – especially when placed in comparative perspective with Southeast Asia.

Finally, I close by encouraging everyone to submit papers and panels for the 24-26 October 2019 CCSEAS Conference in Montreal. The theme for the conference is "Power in Southeast Asia." The conference will be jointly held in Montreal at the University of Sherbrooke (Longueuil campus) and McGill University. Please see the call for papers in this newsletter for the details. I look forward to seeing you in Montreal in October 2019!

Dr. Erik Martinez Kuhonta
CCSEAS President 2017-2019

TRANSITION URBAINE À HANOI :

Relations entre communautés villageoises préétablies et nouvelle zone urbaine

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L'urbanisation à Hanoi transforme la forme de la ville. Des villages millénaires à la périphérie de la capitale vietnamienne, autrefois entourés de rizières, côtoient désormais des gratte-ciels jonchés de grues, des centres commerciaux dynamiques et des boulevards embouteillés. De grands ensembles immobiliers intégrés – « nouvelles zones urbaines » ou khu do thi moi en vietnamien (ci-après KDTM) – voient le jour à la porte de ces multiples villages, changeant profondément les modes de vie ancestraux. Ce modèle de développement urbain, datant des années 1990, vise à fournir des logements de bonne qualité à la population urbaine en forte croissance dans l'ensemble du pays, et ce, dans des environnements modernes. Au tournant du nouveau millénaire, les KDTM sont devenus le modèle dominant de la production planifiée du logement dans la marge des villes vietnamiennes. Or, ces nouvelles constructions ont des impacts majeurs dans leur milieu d'insertion, elles déstabilisent le territoire périurbain et les milieux villageois préexistants ainsi que leurs populations. Notamment, leur construction entraîne l'acquisition de terres agricoles en périphérie de la capitale et la perte conséquente des moyens de subsistance pour les fermiers préalablement établis. À Hanoi, ce sont généralement les terres agricoles qui sont investies, gardant les villages compacts aux marges de la ville en place intouchés. L'urbanisation se tâche d'investir chacune des interstices vides en périphérie de la capitale, gobant les espaces non bâtis et encerclant les villages et leurs populations qui y vivent parfois depuis des générations.

Membre du projet de recherche « Bridging the Gap: New Towns and Village-Based Urbanization in Hanoi (Vietnam) », j'ai eu la chance au cours de l'été 2017 d'effectuer un séjour de recherche de trois mois à Hanoi pour faire ma collecte de données pour mon travail dirigé de maîtrise. Dans ce travail, je m'intéresse aux répercussions variées qu'ont les khu do thi moi sur leur environnement à la suite de leur établissement, que ce soit au travers des liens qui se sont tissés avec les milieux villageois voisins ou les opportunités multiples qui ont émergé pour les populations limitrophes. En fait, de nombreuses recherches antérieures entreprises sur le sujet ont davantage mis l'accent sur les perturbations que ces zones créent dans leur environnement immédiat et sur leur difficile intégration avec les milieux villageois adjacents, mettant de côté leurs effets bénéfiques potentiels. C'est pourquoi, dans ce travail de recherche, on tente de cerner les retombées variées qu'ont à long terme ces nouvelles zones urbaines afin de mieux comprendre ces espaces et faciliter leur intégration dans leur environnement.

Cette recherche se penche sur un KDTM de la périphérie de Hanoi nommé Van Quan et sur trois villages adjacents à celui-ci. Grâce à des partenaires étudiants vietnamiens qui ont été mes interprètes et mes guides tout au long de l'été, une soixan-

Pagode à la frontière d'un village.

taine d'entrevues ont été réalisées de juin à août 2017 avec des résidents de cette nouvelle zone urbaine ainsi qu'avec des résidents et travailleurs des villages voisins. De nombreux éléments sont ressortis de ces entretiens. D'abord, et étonnamment, une majorité de villageois interviewés ont un sentiment de satisfaction face à leur vie depuis la construction du KDTM. Les changements bénéfiques mentionnés par les informateurs sont nombreux et touchent à de multiples facettes de leur quotidien : augmentation des clients potentiels et des opportunités commerciales; hausse de l'offre locale en matière de divertissement, de l'offre de services, du nombre de magasins; meilleures infrastructures urbaines.

En outre, une grande part des villageois qui ont perdu leurs terres agricoles, et donc leur principal moyen de subsistance, ont déclaré être tout de même satisfaits de leur nouvelle vie. Ces individus ont expliqué que l'arrivée du KDTM entraînait la fin des travaux agricoles, jugés épuisants, et leur donnait accès à une compensation monétaire qu'ils pourraient judicieusement investir. De plus, pour certains ménages, l'attribution de « terres de service » dans le cadre de programmes d'indemnisation des pertes, souvent utilisées pour construire un nouveau bâtiment à louer, a été un élément positif additionnel mentionné. Les compensations monétaires reçues étant minimes au regard du prix de ces terres sur le marché libre, l'attribution additionnelle de terres de service s'est révélée être capitale pour une vie post-agraire satisfaisante et afin de se bâtir un nouveau moyen de subsistance.

Pour leur part, les villageois insatisfaits de leur vie depuis la construction du KDTM ont généralement déclaré qu'ils acceptaient, malgré tout, les changements dans leur environnement et la décision du gouvernement de permettre la construction du KDTM. Insatisfaction semble rimer avec acceptation dans notre étude de cas.

Enfin, il faut souligner que la zone d'interface entre le KDTM de Van Quan et les villages périphériques est primordiale. Autour des frontières, davantage d'activités économiques prennent forme, parfois des relations amicales naissent créant des liens de communauté entre les deux groupes voisins. Ainsi, l'important rôle que joue la zone frontalière dans la nouvelle zone urbaine de Van Quan, où se côtoient relativement harmonieusement les habitants du KDTM et les villageois préétablis, pourrait servir d'exemple pour la construction de futurs KDTM à Hanoi, et même au Vietnam. En effet, pourquoi ne pas positionner les espaces résidentiels au centre des projets et les espaces publics – parcs, zones d'exercice, marchés publics, cafés, etc. – à la frontière avec les villages? Ce nouveau type d'aménagement pourrait favoriser les échanges économiques et sociaux, tout en évitant une coupure entre les deux secteurs et entre les communautés qui y vivent.

WEAKNESS OF STRONG TIES?

A Debatable Logic Behind Emigration in Cambodia

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Cambodia has met with a stable economic recovery in recent years. Its GDP reached 7 % in 2016 and it was given the symbolic recognition of Asia's New Tiger Economy (ADB, 2016). The growth lies in various factors, one of which is labor migration. From 2000 to 2015, the number of Cambodian emigrants increased from 3.7 % out of a total population of 12 million to 7.6 % out of a total population of 15.5 million (OECD/CDRI, 2010). Migration studies have traditionally focused on the push-pull factors of migration. Push factors include poverty, lack of employment and alternative sources of income, debt, natural disasters, and landlessness, whereas pull factors have to do with wage differentials and uneven economies in the region. A distinctive aspect of pull factors relates to social networks in the sense that Cambodian migrants receive help from relatives, friends, villagers, and brokers for their migration journey. Pioneer migrants who have good connections with employers are key players in bringing new migrants to work in host countries. Approximately, half of Cambodian migrants go to work in Thailand with the help of a broker, 29% with the help of relatives, 4% via friends, and 3% via recruitment agencies (OECD/CDRI, 2010). However, there is a gap of knowledge in this report's analysis, because social networks have not been examined as a "push factor". We know how migrants get access to jobs in a destination country through social networks, but we know almost nothing about how social networks in their home village, surprisingly, push them to emigrate in search of economic relief. According to empirical data from interviews and observations in Kandal village, Preah Netre Preah commune, and Banteay Meanchey village, Cambodia, this study attempts to point out the relationship between social networks and push-factor of migration to Thailand in particular.

While scholars, as Mark S. Granovetter (1973), highlight the relevance of social networks and ties in upgrading economic outcomes for individuals, empirical data collected from small business owners in Kandal shows that the strong demands of social networks and friends might be detrimental for the economic conditions of individuals. This impediment is related to "unpaid debt" accumulated in the local businesses, when friends or neighbors consume goods and services without paying right away, on the basis that they know each other well. The business owners, not wanting to damage their social relations, agree on providing friends and neighbors with the opportunity to pay in a later date. Over time, the debt increases. Moreover, "consecutive" demands from the owner to get paid would be considered as a non-saving-face behavior. Hence, some business owners tend to wait to be paid rather than asking their friends to pay. Subconsciously, the debt is left unpaid, leaving the business owners unable to sustain their business any longer. The following cases illustrate this:

Case 1 Sitha was a lottery retailer, selling various kind of lottery to villagers in Kandal and others. The majority of his customers were his neighbors. The

Neighbors and close friends, also can harm individuals in economic terms and lead them to migrate in search of economic relief.

relationship between his customers and him was getting stronger as they sold and bought lottery every day. However, the business became financially difficult because his khnea-aeng - a Khmer term for peers and networks - owed him money with a broken promise to pay. Sitha found it uneasy to ask them to pay the debt because of his concern of damaging his relationships. Within that context, the individual debtors would have thought that it was "not a big deal" as each of their share seemed just a little (i.e. about 2000 KHR or 20 THB). However, Sitha accumulated unpaid debts of over 1 million KHR, causing his lottery business to go bankrupt. His family's livelihood worsened as the business was ruined and his children grew older. His wife, then, decided to migrate to Thailand to seek supplementary income for the household. His three children followed suit to work in Thailand with their mom, who returned later. Today, Sitha and his wife survive mainly on money remitted from their children in Thailand whilst lottery is now just a hobby, not a business. Not only did Sitha's family suffer from the "weakness of strong ties" but during my research, I met other young couples who started a small business and reached the same dilemma.

Case 2 Chanty has two daughters. The oldest already got married and settled down with her husband who owns a small motorbike garage in Kandal village. The business got unprofitable because the amount of unpaid debt amounted to 2 million KHR. The debt was owed by villagers and neighbors the young couple knew both in Kandal and in neighboring villages. They tried to ask for the payment, but the debtors gave them false promises that they would pay later. Eventually, the debt became forgotten, while some of the neighbors had gone to Thailand. Such unpaid debts pushed their motorbike garage into bankruptcy. The young couple decided to migrate to Thailand after seeing that Chanty's youngest daughter had earned a lot of money there. Today, the couple is saving money to open a new motorbike garage once they return to Cambodia. But this time, they will plan to relocate their business in a different area.

In sum, based on the findings in a migrant-sending village, I propose a wider discussion about the roles of social networks in capitalizing and de-capitalizing economic outcomes of individuals. On the one hand, social networks, such as friends and neighbors, can support migrants in getting access to jobs and other economic opportunities. On the other hand, social networks, mainly neighbors and close friends, also can harm individuals in economic terms and lead them to migrate in search of economic relief.

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Tours d'habitations abordables et quartier défavorisé en périphérie de Yangon.

LA CRISE DU LOGEMENT À YANGON

Enjeu central de la planification urbaine

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Photos par Antoine Chamberland

En 2011, le Myanmar a amorcé une transition démocratique qui l'a éventuellement mené aux élections libres de 2015, remportées par la Ligue nationale pour la démocratie, parti d'Aung San Suu Kyi. L'ouverture politique a marqué une rupture nette dans les stratégies de développement urbain à Yangon, métropole du pays. Dans un contexte de forte croissance démographique, le gouvernement de transition (2011-2015) a voulu s'attaquer aux problèmes de développement de Yangon en adoptant des politiques de planification urbaine stratégique. Ce type de planification applique des principes économiques néolibéraux en visant à intégrer la ville dans les réseaux d'échanges mondiaux et en mettant en place des mesures favorisant l'attraction d'investissements telles que la création de zones économiques spéciales, l'amélioration des infrastructures de transport et la priorisation des partenariats-publics privés dans le développement urbain.

Dans le cadre de mon terrain de recherche exploratoire de maîtrise, qui porte sur le rôle des nouvelles formes de planification urbaine dans les dynamiques d'exclusion sociospatiale, je me suis penché sur la gestion de la crise du logement à Yangon, qui se caractérise autant par un manque de logements abordables que par leur précarité généralisée. Mes résultats préliminaires s'appuient sur des entretiens réalisés avec des chercheurs, acteurs du développement urbain (c'est-à-dire des entrepreneurs, ONG, agents de coopération internationale) et citoyens.

Si l'intensification de la crise est assez récente, le phénomène comme tel ne date pas d'hier. En effet, les origines de cette situation peuvent remonter aux politiques de logement presque inexistantes des gouvernements militaires s'étant succédé des années 1960 jusqu'à la transition démocratique en 2011. Sa récente aggravation découle toutefois davantage de l'explosion démographique qui est elle-même due à plusieurs facteurs. Tout d'abord, l'exode rural joue un grand rôle dans l'augmentation de la population à Yangon étant donné que le Myanmar est en rapide transition urbaine. Cette

situation, jumelée aux nombreuses catastrophes naturelles touchant le pays, alimente les flux migratoires vers la métropole birmane. En 2008, le cyclone Nargis a frappé le delta de l'Irrawaddy et a tué environ 140 000 personnes. Cette catastrophe a aussi poussé des centaines de milliers de Birmans à fuir cette zone et à s'installer en périphérie de Yangon. Les aléas naturels jouent donc un fort rôle dans la crise du logement, puisque ces nouveaux citoyens urbains sont généralement pauvres et ils ne peuvent souvent que se permettre des habitations précaires. Au-delà de la dimension démographique, la forte spéculation immobilière et foncière explique aussi en grande partie la crise du logement à Yangon puisque la bulle spéculative s'y est grandement aggravée depuis l'ouverture politique en 2011. Deux facteurs contribuent à l'augmentation de la valeur de la ressource foncière: 1) l'arrivée massive d'investissements étrangers dans la ville, alimentée par les occasions offertes par les nouvelles méthodes de planification urbaine mettant l'accent sur l'attraction de capitaux étrangers ; 2) la popularisation de l'accumulation de capitaux par la spéculation foncière, tant chez les investisseurs majeurs que chez les petits propriétaires. Les prix devenus trop élevés, les habitants les plus pauvres peinent à se procurer un domicile de qualité et situé dans un espace central de la ville. Dans le contexte de transition politique ayant mené à l'élection d'un gouvernement civil, que font donc les autorités pour pallier le manque de logement à Yangon?

Pour répondre à la crise, les autorités nationales, régionales et locales misent beaucoup sur une planification urbaine reposant sur l'aménagement de villes nouvelles et la construction de grands immeubles d'habitations abordables en périphérie de Yangon. Ces derniers offriraient des logements à faibles coûts aux habitants n'ayant pas les moyens de vivre dans les espaces centraux. Ces projets résidentiels se retrouvent dans des zones en friche en périphérie puisque le prix de la terre est trop élevé en ville. Excentrés, ils n'offrent que très peu d'occasions commerciales ou d'emplois intéressants.

De plus, ces projets de grande ampleur sont opérés par des partenariats publics-privés. Le gouvernement prend en charge environ 20 % des coûts et le reste provient de l'acteur privé. Le Ministère du développement de l'habitat a opté pour cette formule puisqu'il manque lui-même de fonds pour entreprendre seul la réalisation de ces projets très coûteux. Plusieurs entreprises privées mandatées pour la construction des tours profitent des largesses de l'État pour imposer des hausses de tarifs. Ceci a eu pour effet de faire gonfler les prix de ces logements, les rendant ainsi inabordables pour le public initialement visé par ces projets résidentiels. Étant donné que la plupart de ceux-ci se trouvent dans des emplacements périurbains encore fortement agricoles, peu de locataires potentiels sont attirés. Les tours et les bâtiments résidentiels déjà construits montrent donc des taux d'occupation très bas.

Lors de mes entretiens préliminaires, j'ai pu comprendre que peu d'acteurs du développement urbain de Yangon semblent optimistes quant au succès des efforts en matière d'habitation du gouvernement en place. La crise du logement a de fortes chances de devenir l'enjeu-clé du développement de Yangon dans les prochaines décennies. Plus qu'un enjeu du quotidien, la question du logement à Yangon interroge directement le rôle de l'acteur privé dans le développement urbain d'une métropole asiatique.

A TALE OF THREE CULTURAL WORLDS

My Experience with Hybridity in Vietnam

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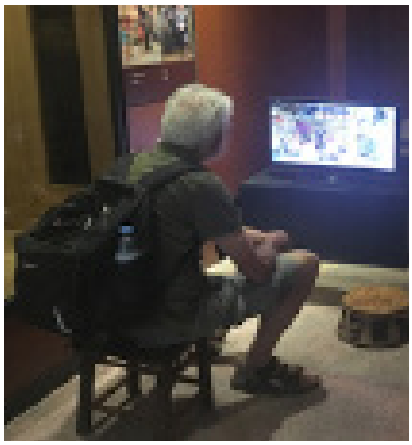
Photos by Connie Phung



Photos taken at the Vietnam Ethnology Museum.

Navigating Identity

This summer, I lived in Hanoi for one month and got the opportunity to meet with Vietnamese researchers, scholars, and academics in the humanities and social sciences field. My purpose was to visit the region before defining my research questions, so I went as a graduate student/traveler. While my excursion to Vietnam was short, the trip served as a taster to how I would culturally navigate my researcher positionality as a hybrid Vietnamese-Chinese Canadian identity (my great grandparents had emigrated from China to Vietnam, where my parents were born and raised).

My experience fits within a distinct context of national belonging that straddles notions of citizenship and ethnicity (Ong, 1999). Place-based notion of identity suggests historicizing identity and considers culture within spatial and temporal dimensions (Dirlik, 1999). During my time in Vietnam, I reflected, re-negotiated, and historicized my identity under political and cultural terms. I purposely chose to stay in the North, a region with more French influence, and a smaller Chinese population – everything that I thought would give me a different subjective experience in Vietnam.

People I encountered through everyday interactions were often curious about my identity as a person who looked ethnically Asian, but who dressed like a foreigner. I became extremely aware of the way I dressed, my form of speech, and the ways in which I carried myself. In the words of Bourdieu, I was extremely conscious of my habitus.

During a layover flight to Hanoi, I sat beside a young Vietnamese couple. They noticed I spoke English to the flight attendant and asked where I was from. This question reoccurred often during my stay in Vietnam, and I would say, "I am born in Canada." My response was always followed by confused expressions, "But you look Asian. Are you Asian?"

Being read as Asian, carrying a Canadian citizenship, and speaking fluent English, is perplexing to many outside the North-American bubble. It was not until I stop correcting people's definitions of my ethnic/national background that I fully understood their confusion, due to the conscious efforts to fuse national citizenship and race.

In spite of my limited knowledge of the Vietnamese language, I took initiative to speak with those I interacted with, either with a waitress at a restaurant, a cashier at a café, or a nearby street vendor. A few taxi drivers had noted my foreignness, but quickly understood my background as người hoa (Vietnamese-Chinese) without my explanation; others, meanwhile, identified me as Vietnamese. For example, in reference to my family background as việt kiều (overseas Vietnamese), someone sitting beside me on the plane had even said, "Welcome home, you are back in the homeland!"

But I didn't understand the national embrace. I expected a degree of hostility, rather than being welcomed back to the homeland. After the Vietnam War, Vietnam secluded itself from the world, and millions of Vietnamese-Chinese and Sino-Vietnamese were chased out of the country, especially in 1979 with the Third Indochina War war between China and Vietnam. A hotel staff had explained, "After being in Vietnam for a long time, người hoa consider themselves Vietnamese, and we see them as Vietnamese too."

Being Asian-Canadian in Vietnam

Despite knowledge of my citizenship and birthplace, and my presence as a foreigner, very few people identified me as Canadian. In other words, I didn't fit the racial imaginary of White Canada. In Canada, those of us born in the country and who identify as Canadian, or with a hyphenated identity, have a mutual understanding of what being Canadian means, with or without a hyphenated qualifier.

My experience in Vietnam as a graduate student was revealing in many ways for a young social scientist, but there is a lack of conversation around hybrid subject positions unique to researchers, and how hybridity can affect subjectivity.

Having the chance to speak with other researchers and scholars in Vietnam, I was cognizant of my hybrid identity based on the intersections of race, culture, and age. The struggle to reconcile opposing narratives paints an authoritative portrait of what boundaries a transnational identity can and cannot skirt on foreign grounds.

My preliminary experience in the field allowed me to reflect on the identity of 'Asian Canadian', as well as the cultural attitudes surrounding the Vietnamese-Chinese identity within today's Vietnam. At the end of my trip, however, I understood that this experience was only a snippet to what it means to be Asian-Canadian with a transnational consciousness.

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CERTIFYING SUSTAINABILITY

The Case of Palm Oil in Indonesia

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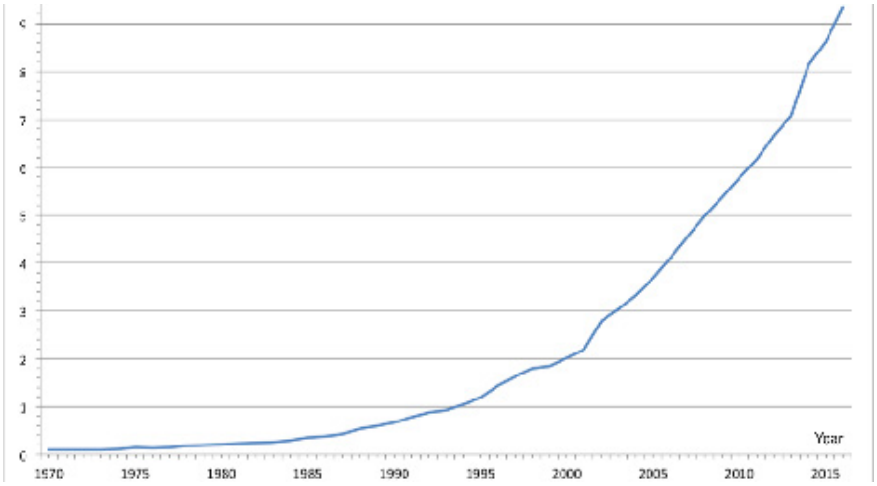

Figure 1: Palm fruit harvested area in Indonesia (millions of hectares), 1970-2016

Palm oil has become a major commodity in today's world markets and is found in a wide range of products ranging from prepared dishes, pastries, cosmetics and soaps to biofuels (Omont, 2010). In Indonesia, the world's most important palm oil producer, palm tree plantations expanded to over 9.3 million hectares in 2016 (Figure 1) (FAOSTAT, 2018). This production has been widely criticized for causing deforestation, biodiversity loss, greenhouse gas emissions (through deforestation), conflicts within local and indigenous communities, land grabbing, and so on.

In Indonesia, two major certification schemes aim to improve practices within the palm oil sector: the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), and the Indonesian Sustainable Palm Oil (ISPO). The RSPO is an international multi-stakeholder non-profit organization created by third-party actors such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Unilever in 2004. The ISPO is a certification body created by the Indonesian government in 2011 through a ministerial regulation (Gillespie & Harjanthi, 2012). Both standards use a set of Principles and Criteria (P&C) to clarify what they define as 'sustainable' palm oil production. However, both certification bodies are contested, mainly because of their limited effectiveness, small market shares, and due to the contentious relations they maintain with small-scale actors and local communities (Gillespie & Harjanthi, 2012; Greenpeace International, 2013; Richardson, 2015).

Considering this challenging situation, I wanted to investigate the capacity of the RSPO and the ISPO to increase the sustainability of Indonesian palm groves. In order to do so, I compared the specifications and requirements of the two standards with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Figure 2). I selected a maximum of four targets for each of the 17 goals from the SDGs and investigated whether or not these 46 targets were included in the P&C from both the RSPO and ISPO. For example, in order to achieve the first SDG – 'End poverty in all its forms everywhere' – I enquired whether the RSPO and ISPO ensure people live with more than US$ 1.90 a day, implement social protection systems and ensure access to land, other natural resources and basic services. For the fourteenth SDG – 'Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable

development' – I examined if the P&C of the RSPO and the ISPO require certified companies to reduce marine pollution, in particular from land-based activities.

Through undergoing a systematic analysis for each of the 17 SDGs, I demonstrate that the guidelines of the both the RSPO and the ISPO mention less than 50% of the SDGs targets introduced in the analytical grid. The RSPO and the ISPO seem therefore to promote a very narrow understanding of sustainability. The two certification bodies' regulations remain largely focused on agricultural practices and economic gains, and fail to thoroughly consider other sectors – such as health, education and energy efficiency – and more vulnerable groups – such as children, women, smallholders, indigenous people and local communities. Most significantly and surprisingly, none of the certification bodies recognizes the connection between environmental degradation and economic growth, or even mentions climate change and deforestation in its P&C, in spite of these aspects being key issues in the palm oil sector. The interpretation of the data also demonstrates that the RSPO and ISPO guidelines primarily require certified companies to only comply with national laws and regulations. This raises questions regarding the responsibility of certification bodies to monitor the application of national legal frameworks, which remains officially the role of the executive authority of the State. In addition, for certifications to truly contribute to the sustainability of the palm oil sector, they should ensure the implementation of standards and requirements that are stricter than those provided by national laws.

Figure 2: The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

These results bring us to question the ability of both certifications to truly foster sustainable practices in the Indonesian palm oil sector. In order to really improve practices within the palm oil sector, certifications should promote state-of-the-art practices, and aligning more closely to the SDGs should only be a first step in that regard. Reflecting on the case of palm oil certification in Indonesia raises questions in regards to certifications' ability to genuinely foster more sustainable practices, more especially in 'weak governance' contexts. Ultimately, the results of this research allow us to question how development and governance projects translate the level of trust and the consideration of the Global North towards the Global South.

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FIELDWORK AND FAMILY LIFE IN PHNOM PENH

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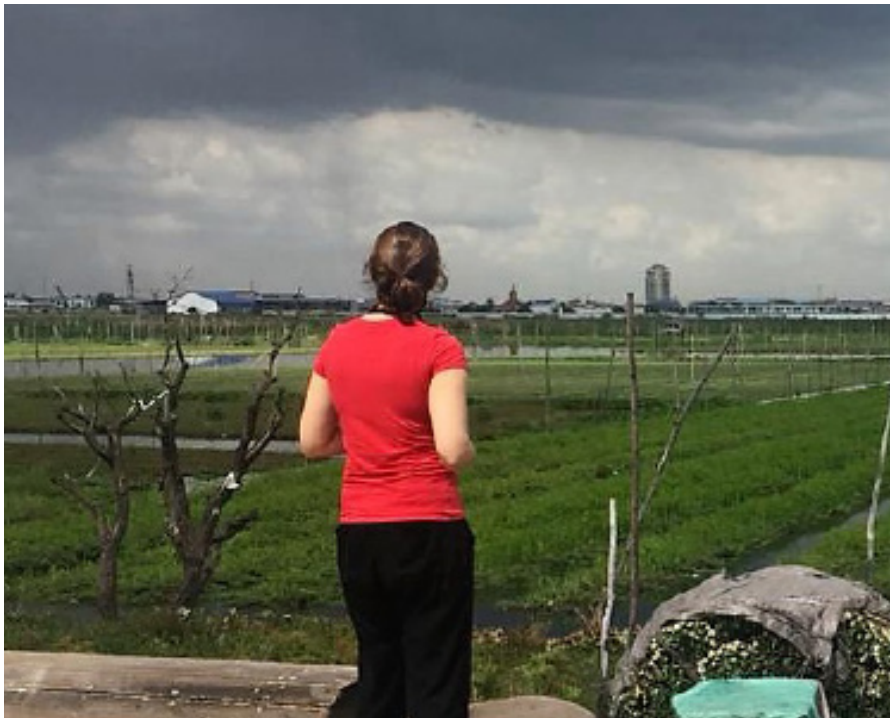

Photo of Laura Beckwith on the field.

I defended my research proposal in June 2017 and six weeks later gave birth to my son. There is a cliché that doing a PhD is akin to having a child, in that the research becomes your "baby," so doing both simultaneously could create either great synergy or great conflict. I wasn't sure which. I received mixed reactions to the idea of taking an infant to Southeast Asia to do field work. While those close to me were supportive, I encountered other reactions ranging from condescension to horror from both Canadians and Cambodians. I was told flat out on more than one occasion: "You can't do field work with a baby".

But eight months in, our time as a family in Phnom Penh has been delightful. With apologies for the generalization: Cambodians love babies; when we walk past construction sites men stop working to shout and wave at my son in his carrier, we have been chased by a police officer who wanted to touch his toes and pinch his cheeks, he has been picked up and cuddled by countless strangers… Although I struggled to learn the Khmer language, before I had even learned to ask for directions I had learned to answer two basic questions: "boy or girl?" And, "how old?" We arrived in Cambodia when my son was 10 weeks old and so, my fieldwork was also my maternity leave. I kept a relaxed pace, fitting in interviews around naps and playdates and learning to be a parent at the same time as learning to be a researcher.

My field work site is a small village in a peri-urban area not far from my apartment where the residents are mostly urban farmers. They grow aquatic vegetables in small plots on the surface of a lake and sell them in the local markets. Some families have been in the area since the fall of the Khmer Rouge in 1979, but for many it is a second attempt to make a living after their rural rice farms failed due to successive years of drought. In the city, their livelihoods are again threatened – both by environmental changes and the expansion of the city into their farmlands. All of the evidence collected so far indicates that it is only a matter of time before urban agriculture in this area is

Raising a baby in Cambodia has been a beautiful experience, but the ease and comfort of my life is not a reality that is accessible to all of Phnom Penh's parents.

no longer viable; either the water will become too contaminated, the unpredictability of the weather will mean crop losses will become too high, or the area will simply be paved over and turned into condos. The question has really become¬¬ which will happen first.

The farmers are well aware that time is running out. I have been asking people what they plan to do once they can no longer farm, in an effort to explore the slippery concept of "resilience" in the context of rapid urban development. I have found that rather than adapting to the changes in weather that are presently being experienced, families are looking to their children to secure a more resilient livelihood. Parents with young children, even those with strong and recent ties to the rural areas, are deeply committed to staying in the city to be near schools where their children can get a good education so that they find work "on the land" as opposed to farming "on the water" as their parents have done. The strategy for pursuing the resilience of the family unit stretches across generations, which is a dimension not often considered when we talk about building resilience.

This is a gamble that requires immense sacrifice from parents. Unfortunately, it is uncertain whether it will result in the next generation being any better equipped to deal with the situation than the present. In the face of an increasingly globalized city with rising land prices, deteriorating ecosystems and increasing inequality, families are struggling against systemic forces that are continuously reinforcing their marginalization, despite their efforts to resist.

I had expected motherhood to influence my positionality as a researcher. I had thought it would bring a sense of shared experience with my research participants who were also parents. Instead, it has reinforced the reality of my own privilege. My nationality and socio-economic status insulate me and my family from the immediate effects of climate change and globalization. My child will not carry the weight of responsibility for our future on his shoulders on his first day of school. I can, in fact, easily do fieldwork with a baby. Instead of bringing me closer to my respondents, I am acutely aware of the distance created by the chance of fate that made me a middle class Canadian. Raising a baby in Cambodia has been a beautiful experience, but the ease and comfort of my life is not a reality that is accessible to all of Phnom Penh's parents. I hope my research can illuminate the uncertain future of some of the city's marginalized families to ensure their struggle does not go unrecognized.

Fieldwork for this research was carried out with the aid of grants from the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa Canada, the Ontario Graduate Scholarship and the Urban Climate Resilience in Southeast Asia program.

UNLOVING YOU EVEN BEFORE I SEE YOU

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What could possibly be more universal than maternal love? Even before the baby is born, the expectant mother has mixed feelings of hope and anxiety in each step of the fetal development. She is the source of warmth, nutrients, and safety. She cherishes the heartbeat inside her womb, the fluttering movement and quiet moments, every little kick and squirm. When she eats, she eats for her baby too. When she's happy or sad, her baby will sense the feeling too. When she's doing something for herself, she knows that she's no longer completely alone. She will try but it will be so hard not to think about her baby almost constantly. On the spur of the moment, she will silently communicate, sing, and shower her unborn with the language of affection. An intuitive and "natural" bonding between mother and child is expected as a norm. The lyrics of an Indonesian pop song about a pregnant woman clearly substantiate that being an expectant mother means "loving you [the baby] even before I can see you".

Yet, female anthropologists have contributed to our understanding of how a mother's love to her unborn or newborn is contingent upon social and political circumstances, despite the embodied experience of pregnancy which is "supposed" to condition her to feel an unbreakable connection. For instance, Nancy Scheper-Hughes has provided us with examples of mothers' indifference to the death of their infants in Northeast Brazil. Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing also has shared her disorienting experience of carrying and hugging a premature newborn to keep the baby alive in Meratus, Indonesia. The reluctant response of every woman in the room to do so, including the baby's own mother and grandmother, led her to interpret that perhaps the baby was unwanted in the first place, in which finally all of them let the baby "go" (pass away) with relief.

I have also witnessed experiences of motherhood during my own research in Southeast Aceh, the Northern part of Sumatra, Indonesia. I simply cannot shake off the memory of my "sister", a 17-year-old mom-to-be, who asked her mother with a blank expression, "please cure me so I won't miss my baby." In other words, she had to stop loving her unborn – before she even saw the baby. I still remember that day. Her mom and I were preparing food in the soil-floored kitchen at the back of the house. My "sister" was sweeping the floor and upon looking at her evident pregnant belly, I asked her where she planned to deliver the baby. She said she would do it with a nearby midwife. If she had to do it in the city center's hospital, she would be embarrassed if her friends found it out. "Thank goodness I had the insight to check on her for pregnancy before it was too late," her mother jumped in to explain. "Her marriage ended after 4 months and a half and she was about to depart to Malaysia to look for a job. If we wouldn't have found out that she was pregnant before leaving Indonesia, her ex-husband and mother-in-law would have certainly refused and said it was not their baby but a Malaysian one. I brought the mother-in-law to the hospital so we all could get the results of the pregnancy test together," she said.

Yet my sister still plans to migrate to Malaysia.

"She will deliver the baby and go to Malaysia two weeks afterwards," my sister's mom continued. "Her ex-husbands' mother will take care of the baby. I cannot. Your dad [his husband, my surrogate dad] is sick. I have to take care of him. He can't work in the field. I am the sole breadwinner. I can't take care of a baby. It will also be difficult for me to do the daily prayer – [sholat, Muslims' ritual of praying five times a day which starts with ablution] – when there's a baby I have to constantly clean."

But why did her marriage end? Why did she get married while she hadn't graduated from high school? It was clear that she was not pregnant before marriage.

As a quite independent first-time mother myself, it was a learning curve for me to understand that the extended family still has a lot to say in this marriage. My sister's mother or mother-in-law are the ones who had to bear the responsibility of the unborn child. And, although the marriage itself was based on mutual decision of the two individuals, according to them, it was the decision of the mother-in-law to get them divorced.

My sister's ex-husband was from a different tribe, but that was not exactly the problem. His parents' house is in the neighborhood and they own a small kiosk in front of it. My sister thought she would live there after marriage and watch after the kiosk; she thought she would still live near her own parents. Instead, her mother-in-law obliged them to move to a village almost two hours away to work on the extended family's land. She refused to live in that "quiet village". Her mother-in-law demanded that as a wife she had to follow her husband. But she and her own mother said the mother-in-law was evil for forcing her to move away.

During my fieldwork in this predominantly agricultural society, marriage happens quite frequently among young people who are in their early twenties or even younger. I have found out that it is only after marriage that one is able to own land and acquire the harvest for oneself. Before marriage, one must work for the parents only "to get lunch as salary", to use the words of some of the young people I have talked to. This happens in a context in which getting a job outside farming is almost like a miracle. Parents are often glad of their children's decision to marry, as it means a continuity of the family's lineage and a "better" use of the land – because otherwise, sometimes this land is "borrowed" by other people before being returned to the parents who then ask the newlyweds to work on it. After marriage, the primary responsibility is with the nuclear family. But the link with the extended family never lessens, as the new couple is basically still under the same unit of the extended family's agricultural production. To have a better chance of being a successful farmer, it's better to start your own farm at an early age. And that means starting a family.

But not everybody wants to farm. Some women want to trade in a small kiosk in front of the house, like my sister. Despite her tough-heartedness and solid decision to leave for Malaysia, while both of us were sitting outside and munching jambu fruit, my sister told me, "If only he remembered how much he said he loved me..."

Nadya is doing an ethnography of finance conservation and agrarian labour regime in an ecosystem restoration project in Gunung Leuser National Park, Northern Sumatra, Indonesia.

FINDING A RESEARCH ASSISTANT IN THE KINGDOM OF WONDER

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One of the things that people who have gone through fieldwork themselves tend to mention before you venture off to do it yourself is how things will often progress at a certain "organic" pace and that there will be challenges associated with waiting on things that you cannot control. That remained somewhat opaque and abstract to me—that is, until I arrived in "the field". In my case, that happened to be Cambodia, affectionally called the "Kingdom of Wonder". So, this is the realization I found myself in during the first couple of weeks as I dealt with frustration that started to boil, because I was not getting traction on finding research assistant candidates, which proved to be particularly challenging.

After contacting the people and networks that I did know, I decided, for the sake of hedging my bets, to also find and contact the countless NGOs operating in Cambodia and elicit their help in either connecting me with people or forwarding my message along within their networks. In other words, I just "cold emailed" a slew of people whose contact information I found online. In the end, neither of these methods were effective, although a few were nice enough to forward my email. Another idea which turned out to be the most impactful (thanks goes to my friend Pelle who suggested this) was to advertise the position as job positing on the Cambodia Daily website (the Daily is, now more correctly was, one of a few English language national news outlets). At first, the person responsible for the classifieds at the Cambodia Daily thought I wanted a print ad and told me it would cost $120, but when I explained that I was a grad student on a budget and was only interested in having it posted online, they obliged.

I ended up receiving the majority of the seven applicants mostly because of posting on the Daily and was more than pleased with the quality and potential of the candidates. So, in the end, my frustration in my second and third week in Cambodia melted away and I was faced with the opposite problem: the difficult choice of choosing the right person, who would be the best research assistant!?

So, by way of a suggestion to other grad students who may be reading this: if you are in the market for a translator, find out what English language news outlets are in the city/community that you are in, reach out and try to advertise there. If there are no

When it comes to finding a research assistant, whichever route you decide to go, ask nicely, stay persistent, and be honest/genuine!

English language outlets, then perhaps try to find out what the more popular local/national media players are and inquire about posting an ad (either in print or online). While I was able to (luckily) do it without cost, do not let that be a barrier should there be a reasonable fee because the returns from such an investment could be priceless! Outside of online or print, another idea to consider is putting an ad on the radio since, in some communities, many people get their information through this medium. That may seem daunting but if your local context makes it a compelling option, consider trying it.

An aspect related to finding a research assistant that I think receives less attention within discussions on doing fieldwork is the importance of the dynamics between the researcher and the research assistant and how the positionality of the assistant affects and makes a mark on the research. This is especially important in cases where the researcher has little to no knowledge of the language (not to mention cultural norms, etc.) and is relying on the assistant for translation/interpretation. Professor Sarah Turner shines a light on this in a chapter ('The Silenced Research Assistant Speaks Her Mind') within the book Red Stamps and Gold Stars: fieldwork dilemmas in upland socialist Asia (2013). This chapter (and the book in general for those doing work in Laos/Viet Nam) is a worthwhile read for any graduate student embarking on doing fieldwork and finding a research assistant (for instructors/profs: an important addition to a readings list for a research methods course). As it happened with me, hopefully it leaves you reflecting on either your past or future experience of working with a research assistant.

Many of us know, or are currently experiencing, the vagaries and challenges associated with doing fieldwork. When it comes to finding a research assistant, whichever route (out of the above suggestions) you decide to go, ask nicely, stay persistent, and be honest/genuine—it goes a long way to things working out!

Furqan's doctoral research looks at migration of people from coastal fishing areas to cities in Cambodia (where he did his fieldwork over a 18-month period). It attempts to uncover why some people leave while others stay and the implications this has on their social wellbeing and social resilience.

Mutual Supportiveness of SDG 16.3 and the WTO Agreement: Rule of Law to Protect both Trade and Human Rights

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Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.3 engages United Nations (UN) Member States to "promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all". Yet, in a world of sovereign states who rarely modify their behaviour voluntarily, how can the UN ensure progress toward this goal? Identifying both ASEAN and Singapore as particular examples in this regard, Ewing-Chow, James Losari, and Vilarasu Slade show how the rule of law provides smaller economies a comparative advantage for trade:

> "The rule of law has the potential to assist supply-side constrained countries by granting them a comparative advantage and a strong basis to attract investment in order to supplement areas in which they are, by reasons of geography or history, found to be lacking" (2014: 134).

The rule of law is also an important means of promoting respect for human rights. Nonetheless, the UN Economic and Social Council records that

> "Rates of pretrial detention suggest that progress with respect to the rule of law and access to justice has been slow. Globally, the proportion of people held in detention without being sentenced for a crime has remained almost unchanged…which indicates that substantive progress has not been achieved in the ability of judicial systems to process and try the accused in a fair and transparent manner" (2017: 17).

Human-rights practitioners often feel that UN human rights treaties are often 'not enforced' (Koh, 1999: 1398). In contrast, the WTO credibly possesses "the most successful system of inter-state dispute resolution ever established" (WTO, 2015). These two international rule-systems are not broadly coordinated. According to the UN International Law Commission, such potential instances of "fragmentation… result [in] conflicts between rules or rule-systems, deviating institutional practices and, possibly, the loss of an overall perspective on the law" (International Law Commission, 2006: 11).

Mutual supportiveness, increasingly recognized as a general principle of international law, helps overcome fragmentation (Boisson de Chazournes & Mbengue, 2012: 1616). It shows that differing rule-systems share values in common, allowing them to work together. Former World Trade Organization (WTO) Director-General Pascal Lamy stated that "human rights and trade are mutually supportive. Human rights are essential to the good functioning of the multilateral trading system, and trade and WTO rules contribute to the realization of human rights" (Lamy, 2010).

Together with SDG 16.3, the doctrine of mutual supportiveness offers a perspective on a way forward. The WTO Agreement's Preamble commits that organization to "the objective of sustainable development" (WTO, 1994). Protecting both trade interests and respect for human rights rely on a shared need for the rule of law: as Sustainable Development Goal 16.3 prescribes.

Rule of law, as part of the Sustainable Development Goals, benefits both the growth of regional economies like ASEAN, and civil society in its pursuit of respect for human rights. The economic power of the former can help to achieve the social goals of the latter, for a mutually shared benefit.

References available in the newsletter Web version.

Emerging Myanmar Initiative between the University of British Columbia (UBC) and the Yangon University of Economics (YUE)

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UBC's Institute of Asian Research launched the second year of its policy research capacity building program with the Yangon University of Economics (YUE) in Myanmar this summer. The program is part of a series of initiatives in Myanmar sponsored by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Its primary aim is to support the policy research skills of YUE's teaching staff and senior graduate students, many of whom are mid-career professionals involved in the policy process.

Myanmar is widely known to be rich in human and natural resources. These have helped drive rapid development since the country began a complex transition in 2011. Yet while the World Bank projects growth rates of over 6% for the near future, more than half a century of relative isolation and ongoing conflict leave deep challenges, including the historical neglect of training for effective policy engagement in Myanmar universities.

This creates a unique opportunity for collaboration between Canadian and Myanmar universities. The UBC-YUE summer program is designed to disseminate various policy frameworks and research tools common in the North American context, including UBC's School of Public Policy and Global Affairs. Given the active role that many YUE graduates play in Myanmar's policy arena, this creates the potential to positively impact the development process.

The summer program is comprised of three courses that target policy-oriented research: Key Concepts and Methods for Policy Research taught by Kai Ostwald from UBC; Policy Analysis taught by Rick Barichello from UBC; and Survey Research, Interviews, and Data for Policy Research taught by Paul Schuler from the University of Arizona. The courses were supported by UBC PhD students, including Isabel Chew and Nathan Peng from the department of Political Science.

Each course ran for five days. The daily three-hour sessions emphasized hands-on practice and mutual learning. Participants were encouraged to apply the concepts and tools to policy problems they encounter in their professional lives, as well as to the research projects several have to complete for their degree requirements.

Interactions with the participants allowed valuable insights into the complexities of the governance, peace, and economic transitions in Myanmar.

Beyond the organized course content, much of the learning came through input from the remarkably diverse range of participants, many of whom are actively engaged in complex and occasionally contentious policy dialogues or decision-making processes in their professional capacities. This included parliamentarian, a section head from the Ministry of Industry, a director of planning and finance from the Ministry of Health and Sports, a director of research and innovation from the Ministry of Education, and several other participants with roles in the ongoing peace process.

Feedback from the courses was positive. Despite the important roles many of the executive students play in the public sector and NGOs, more than half indicated that they had no previous research training. Many of the participants highlighted the utility of the courses in equipping them with the tools and concepts that could be directly applied in the course of their work. The learning experience for the UBC participants was equally rich, as interactions with the participants allowed valuable insights into the complexities of the governance, peace, and economic transitions in Myanmar.

As importantly, the program builds new ties between Myanmar and Canada that will last beyond the scope of the current initiative. This includes several research projects to be jointly conducted by UBC faculty and PhD students together with counterparts from Myanmar. In an additional component of the program, two YUE students completed a full semester in UBC's Masters of Public Policy and Global Affairs program early this year. UBC plans to welcome two additional students in the 2018/19 academic year, as well as a visiting professor from YUE. These channels enable further mutual learning and open the door to deeper collaboration in the future.

2019 CONFERENCE OF THE CCSEAS. CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS: "POWER IN SOUTHEAST ASIA"

Questions of power permeate virtually all social relations and social facts. Southeast Asia is an especially fertile area in which to examine the question of power. The notion of power itself invites critical inquiries from many disciplinary and ontological perspectives. How is power expressed in Southeast Asian states, societies, and cultures? How do historical legacies, such as colonialism and the Cold War, affect power relations in the contemporary world? How do social forces, including class structures, ethnic groups, and religious communities, resist the exertion of power or reinforce existing powers of domination? How does power compel people to act without their knowledge? What are the channels or practices by which various forms of power are manifest? How is power understood, conceptualized, and represented in different fields of social inquiry, including the social sciences, humanities, and performing arts? Whether one is interested in transnational flows, religious movements, symbols and discourse, or gender relations, power is an important element that suffuses social and political life in Southeast Asia and beyond.

The 2019 Conference of the Canadian Council for Southeast Asian Studies, to be held in Montreal, invites papers and panels on the theme of power in all its manifestations. We especially encourage proposals that address the question of power from inter-disciplinary and comparative perspectives. The conference organizers will also consider panels on a variety of topics, but are especially interested in submissions that engage with the conference theme of power. The conference will be held in Montreal, jointly at McGill University and the University of Sherbrooke (Longueuil campus), on October 24-26. Please submit your panels and paper proposals on the CCSEAS website. The website will be open for submissions on 1 December 2018. The deadline for submissions is 1 April 2019.

ANNONCE

CONFÉRENCE 2019 DU CCEASE APPEL DE PROPOSITIONS DE TEXTES : « LE POUVOIR EN ASIE DU SUD-EST »

Les questions de pouvoir affectent la quasi-totalité des relations sociales et des faits sociaux. L'Asie du Sud-Est est une région particulièrement fertile pour examiner la question du pouvoir. La notion de pouvoir elle-même invite des enquêtes critiques de nombreux points de vue disciplinaires et ontologiques. Comment s'exprime le pouvoir dans les sociétés, les cultures et les États du sud-est asiatique ? Quels sont les héritages historiques, tels que le colonialisme et la guerre froide, sur les relations de pouvoir dans le monde contemporain ? Comment les forces sociales, incluant les structures de classe, des groupes ethniques et des communautés religieuses résistent à l'effort du pouvoir ou renforcent les pouvoirs de leur domination ? Comment le pouvoir pousse les gens à agir à leur insu ? Par quels canaux ou pratiques les diverses formes de pouvoir se manifestent ? Comment le pouvoir est compris, conceptualisé et représenté dans différents domaines d'enquête sociale, y compris les sciences sociales, sciences humaines et les arts de la scène ? Que l'on s'intéresse aux flux transnationaux, mouvements religieux, symboles et discours ou les relations du genre, le pouvoir est un élément important qui façonne la vie socio-politique en Asie du Sud-Est et au-delà.

La Conférence 2019 du Conseil canadien des études sur l'Asie du Sud-Est lance un appel de textes et panels sur le thème du pouvoir sous toutes ses formes. En particulier, nous encourageons les propositions qui portent sur la question du pouvoir dans une perspective interdisciplinaire et comparative. Les organisateurs de la Conférence considèreront également des panels sur une variété de sujets, mais sont particulièrement intéressés aux présentations qui s'engagent sur le thème de la Conférence. La Conférence se tiendra à Montréal, conjointement à l'Université McGill et l'Université de Sherbrooke (campus Longueuil), du 24 au 26 octobre 2019. Veuillez soumettre vos propositions de panels ou vos propositions de texte sur le site Web du CCEASE. Le site sera ouvert pour accepter les soumissions le 1 décembre 2018 et la date limite est le 1 avril 2019.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

EDITORS
Remy Chhem (University of Ottawa) and ***Wendy Alejandra Medina De Loera*** (York University)

From the moment we started to plan this edition of CCSEAS Newsletter, it was clear that it was our common interest to continue releasing it on a regular basis. This edition is a contribution to the goal for CCSEAS Newsletter to have continuity and it has been made possible only by the work of many. We are especially grateful to all contributors who have worked with us patiently. We also appreciate the guidance and support provided by Nhu Truoung and Irene Poetranto. Their experience as editors of previous CCSEAS Newsletters was crucial for our familiarisation with planning this edition, distributing the call for submissions, reviewing, editing, designing, among others. We are also grateful to Alicia Filipowich for her valuable, generous, and constant assistance for the Newsletter. Finally, we thank everyone on the CCSEAS Executive Committee for their continuing support and encouragement. The Newsletter above is the outcome of collective work and reflects both the vibrant interest on Southeast Asia in Canada and a community that constantly grows around the study of the region.

CCSEAS Newsletters are published twice a year and edited by its graduate student editorial team based in Toronto and Montreal. We welcome your submissions and questions. Get in touch with us at newsletter@ccseas.ca. Previous editions can be accessed on our website at www.ccseas.ca.

Canadian Council for Southeast Asian Studies (CCSEAS) is an association of scholars, students, policymakers and activists with an interest in the academic study of Southeast Asia and its connections to the rest of the world.