

# (RE)CONCEPTUALISING ASIAN CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE AGE OF POST-POLITICS

16-17 AUG 2018



ARI  
ASIAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
National University of Singapore

## Organisers

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Asia is one of the most rapidly urbanising regions of the world (United Nations, 2014), and many Asian cities now face an array of socio-economic and environmental problems that have emerged as a result of this urbanisation and (re)development process. In response to these challenges, questions surrounding how a 'liveable' and 'sustainable' city can be realised are found within the discourses of governments, scholars, and civil society in Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, and more. Whilst existing work reviews top-down initiatives addressing these concerns (see Clark and Moonen, 2016), what remains to be examined is the impact and role of civil society in urban governance, especially in the contemporary context whereby many Asian nations have embraced 'post-political' ideologies and practices. This refers to a process whereby the political is evacuated out of the social, resulting in governance that is populist in nature, centering around consensus and agreement, rather than debate and disagreement (Wilson and Swyngedouw, 2014). Swyngedouw (2009) argues that this has emerged in parallel to the rise of neoliberal governance and decentralisation, which has led to the blending of the private and public spheres.

This conference seeks to better understand how civil society in Asian cities are renegotiating existing—and establishing new—solidarities with each other and with other organisations or institutional bodies to alter the form of urban governance in the post-political era. In particular, we focus on two key aspects of the urban condition; that of the natural (the physical resources and features on the landscape) and the cultural (the tangible and intangible features that pertain to human activities), as respectively represented by urban environmental governance and urban heritage conservation debates. Although urban heritage and urban environmental governance may appear as disparate topics, they are in fact interrelated domains. Both are central components within discussions on urban liveability and sustainability (see Balsas, 2004; Lloyd et al. 2016), and are therefore pivotal and powerful considerations in the generation of new urban governance initiatives.

This conference brings together an interdisciplinary group of scholars who, by examining issues pertaining to urban heritage and natural environment management, trace the emerging relationships between civil society actors and organisations across the scale of the local, regional and (inter)national spheres. In particular, we seek to understand the motivations behind city governments' engagements in heritage and environmental conservation issues. We also aim to refine our thinking about how civil society addresses existing urban development and environmental issues, and envisions potential alternative/new forms of urban governance for urban futures. Some central questions that this conference addresses include:

1. What form has the 'post-political' city taken in Asian cities and who is to blame for it? Is there any variation in how post-politics has taken shape between localities, why/why not?
2. How is civil society conceptualised in Asia, and how are civil groups positioned in relation to local or national governments in the region?
3. What networks between civil society, the local/regional/national government, and international agencies have emerged within the context of post-political governance? What directionality do these networks assume (e.g. 'upward', collaborative links between civil society and local or national governments, or 'outward' connections with transnational organisations)?
4. What opportunities and challenges has the post-political framework wrought for civil society; and what implications does this have for how urban governance in Asian cities will manifest in the future?

# THURSDAY, 16 AUGUST 2018

9:00 – 9:15 REGISTRATION

9:15 – 9:30 OPENING REMARKS

**SONIA LAM-KNOTT**, National University of Singapore  
**CREIGHTON CONNOLLY**, National University of Singapore  
**HO KONG CHONG**, National University of Singapore

9:30 – 11:00 PANEL 1 | THE EMERGENCE OF POST-POLITICAL CITIES IN ASIA

CHAIRPERSON **TIM BUNNELL**, National University of Singapore

9:30 A Return to the Political? Civil Society and Post-Politics in Authoritarian Regimes

**DAVID MATIJASEVICH**, Singapore University of Social Sciences

9:50 Emerging Post-Political City in Seoul

**SEO U-SEOK**, University of Seoul, South Korea

10:10 Government and Civil Society Engagement through Cultural Heritage Policy in Post-Colonial Hong Kong

**FOK YEUNG YEUNG, JIMMY**, University of Leicester, UK

10:30 Questions and Answers

11:00 – 11:30 MORNING TEA

11:30 – 13:00 PANEL 2 | (RE)CONCEPTUALISING CIVIL SOCIETY IN ASIA

CHAIRPERSON **MIHYE CHO**, Singapore University of Technology and Design

11:30 Searching for the Breakthrough in Post-Political City:  
Creating Inclusive City – The Case of Sharing for Future, Seoul

**PARK HAYUN**, University of Seoul, South Korea

11:50 Managing Grievances in the Age of Post Politics:  
Opposition to the Thilawa Special Economic Zone in Myanmar

**TAMAS WELLS**, University of Melbourne, Australia

12:10 Urban Activism and Civic Space in Post-Political Era:  
State Actors-Civil Society Relations in Jakarta and Surabaya

**RITA PADAWANGI**, Singapore University of Social Sciences

12:30 Questions and Answers

13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH

**14:00 – 15:30 PANEL 3A | (RE)CONCEPTUALISING CIVIL ENVIRONMENTALISM IN ASIA**

CHAIRPERSON **MICHELLE MILLER**, National University of Singapore

14:00 **Negotiating Political Space within a Rule of Experts:  
The Dead Fish Controversy in Central Vietnam**

**JASON MORRIS-JUNG**, Singapore University of Social Sciences

14:20 **Politicized Public Participation and Government Responsiveness in Vietnam:  
Reflections on the Case of Hanoi Tree Movement**

**KWAK SEOHEE**, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands

14:40 **Environmental Civil Activism in Authoritarian Central Asia:  
A/No Need for Post-Politics?**

**REINA ARTUR KYZY**, American University of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan, and Otto von Guericke Universität, Germany

15:00 Questions and Answers

15:30 – 16:00 AFTERNOON TEA

**16:00 – 17:00 PANEL 3B | TRANSNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT NETWORKS IN CHINA**

CHAIRPERSON **CP POW**, National University of Singapore

16:00 **The Politics of Marketisation and Shanghai's Third Sector Development**

**VIRGINIE ARANTES**, Free University of Brussels, Belgium

16:20 **Hong Kong's Divided Civil Society: The Case of the 'Save Our Country Park Alliance'**

**STEPHAN ORTMANN**, City University of Hong Kong

16:40 Questions and Answers

17:00 END OF DAY 1

# FRIDAY, 17 AUGUST 2018

## 9:30 – 11:00 PANEL 4 | THE (POST)POLITICS OF ENVIRONMENTAL RISK AND RECOVERY IN THE PHILIPPINES

CHAIRPERSON **DEASY SIMANDJUNTAK**, ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore

9:30 Post-Political Planning and Insurgent Mobilization in the Post-Disaster City: The Experience of Tacloban City, Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan

**DAKILA KIM P. YEE**, University of the Philippines Visayas Tacloban College

9:50 Risk Governance in Metro Manila: De-Politicising State-Civil Society Relations in Crafting Housing Resilience for/with the Poor

**EMMA PORIO**, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines, and Manila Observatory, Philippines

10:10 Upward Direction: A Case Study of the Mother Earth Foundation (MEF) as Post Political Force in Philippine Local Government on Zero Waste Practice

**RONALD M. CASTILLO**, University of Santo Tomas, Philippines

**ARLEN A. ANCHETA**, University of Santo Tomas, Philippines

10:30 Questions and Answers

## 11:00 – 11:30 MORNING TEA

## 11:30 – 13:00 PANEL 5A | URBAN HERITAGE GOVERNANCE IN CHINA AND MALAYSIA

CHAIRPERSON **IAN ROWEN**, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

11:30 Contested Landscape: Heritage Politics in Urban China

**ZHU YUJIE**, Australian National University

11:50 'Connecting Emotions through Wells': Heritage Instrumentalisation, Civic Activism and Urban Sustainability in Quanzhou, China

**CAI YUNCI**, University of Leicester, UK

12:10 Up, Down, Horizontal, and Outward: Network Directionality of Hybrid Institutions in Malaysia's Urban Heritage Governance

**YEW WEI LIT**, Yale-NUS College, Singapore

12:30 Questions and Answers

## 13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH

## 14:00 – 15:00 PANEL 5B | HERITAGE (POST)POLITICS IN INDIA

CHAIRPERSON **HAMZAH MUZAINI**, National University of Singapore

14:00 Post-Politics of Heritage Discourse: A Case Study of Shahdara, Delhi

**PRATIBHA TOMAR**, University of Delhi, India

14:20 Farming as Urban Heritage: By-Pass Governance in Urban South India

**KARL BEELEN**, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany

14:40 Questions and Answers

## 15:00 – 15:45 CLOSING REMARKS & DISCUSSIONS

**SONIA LAM-KNOTT**, National University of Singapore

**CREIGHTON CONNOLLY**, National University of Singapore

**HO KONG CHONG**, National University of Singapore

15:45 END OF WORKSHOP

## A Return to the Political? Civil Society and Post-Politics in Authoritarian Regimes

**David Matijasevich**

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For those who have identified its current prominence (Swyngedouw, Mouffe, Ranciere, Zizek), post-politics is not a condition to be negotiated but radically obliterated. This is for the reason that under it, politics is no longer 'the art of the possible' but rather a limited series of compromises within an overarching framework whose key assumptions are to remain unchallenged. Of the most central of these assumptions are the notions that a consultative capitalism is the necessary third way between left and right and that a logic of consensus is more appropriate than a logic of dissensus. Since this framework is understood to produce deep injustices, the theorists of post-politics propose a "return to the political"—a politics more properly conceived as contestation.

One fundamental problem with the theorists, however, is their prescriptions' implicit reliance on liberal democratic norms and institutions, including freedom of speech and assembly as well as democratic values instilled in the citizenry. As much as they do not wish to give liberal democracy credit, this paper argues that they must do so. For without a more institutional and sociological understanding of what makes a more contentious democracy work, the aforementioned theorists have few answers for civil society in regions like Southeast Asia whereby post-politics has gone hand in hand with growing authoritarian rule. In order to provide more relevant solutions for civil society groups in such polities, the specific nature of post-politics in authoritarian regimes must be explored.

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David MATIJASEVICH is an Associate Faculty member at the Singapore University of Social Sciences and an independent researcher. He received his PhD in Political Science from Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada in 2015. His interests lie at the crossroads of comparative politics and political theory, particularly contemporary democratic theory and practice and state-civil society relations.

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## Emerging Post-Political City in Seoul

### Seo U-Seok

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Seoul shares many characteristics of post-political city including consensual politics and the fading of political debates over urban policy issues. Above all, this might be explained by the fact that most urban policy issues are away from the ideological conflict of Korean politics. Besides, the weakness of urban politics results from a long history of political centralization without any experiences of feudal systems as well as the limited jurisdiction of local governments contrasted with the overwhelming forces of central government. Furthermore, local election in Seoul dominated by the intention of voters to protest against the ruling party of national government leads very often to one-party dominance in urban politics which tends to substantially weaken political function of city council. Despite these de-politicizing conditions the politicization of urban policies occurred, when Lee Myung-Bak (2002-2006) and Oh Se-Hoon (2006-2011) as the mayor of Seoul Metropolitan Government undertook some mega-projects for urban (re-)development which had been confronted with the alliance of left liberal political parties and civic groups. The overt political antagonism has not been dissolved, until Park Won Soon, the former leader of an influential civic organization, became the mayor in 2011 and pursued more inclusive urban governance fostering civic participation. Under the current left liberal urban regime which incorporates a number of civic activists into its administration bodies, the hollowing out of politics in the implementation of urban policies is paradoxically accelerated. The oppositional voices are substantially shrunk, while civic participation on the grass-root level seems to increase not so much as had been expected. From this constellation a post-political city emerges with the formation of urban governance.

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SEO U-Seok is a full professor in the department of urban sociology and also served from 2008 to 2016 as a chair of the department of culture, arts and tourism at the Graduate School of Urban Sciences at the University of Seoul. He received his BA and MA degrees in Sociology from Seoul National University and Ph. in Sociology from the University of Cologne, Germany. His research areas include cultural sociology, urban sociology, cultural policy and research methodology. He published numerous articles in peer-reviewed academic journals and several book chapters. Last years he edited two academic monographs focused on Seoul. He serves currently as editor-in-chief of *Review of Culture and Economy* published by the Korean Association of Cultural Economics and as editorial member of *Journal of Arts, Management and Policy* published by the Korean Association of Arts Management.

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## Government and Civil Society Engagement through Cultural Heritage Policy in Post-Colonial Hong Kong

**Fok Yeung Yeung, Jimmy**

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This paper aims to discuss the emergence of the concept of 'post-political' its conceptualisation in the unique partially democratic context of post-colonial Hong Kong from the perspective of urban heritage studies. In the last decade, empowering local communities as a mechanism for social reconstruction and urban regeneration has become a prevalent trend in Asian cities such as Hong Kong. Building community consensus is perceived as a way to respond to the administrative failure of the government and of the economic market. Urban renewal and heritage conservation is an important arena in which to investigate how the 'post-political' condition is being realized through community engagement and consensus building. The Blue House Clusters are some of the few surviving pre-WW2 buildings (*Tong-lau*) in urban Hong Kong and were first selected to be re-developed as a new commercial tourism project by the government in 2006, with all residents expected to leave. However, local social workers, NGOs (St. James Settlement) and professionals inspired the local community to push back and negotiate a more social-inclusive conservation solution for the clusters, allowing existing residents to stay. The authority adopted their suggestion and with the assistance of the NGO and social workers, the residents are currently attempting to self-govern the heritage site through consensus building and participatory democracy, in an emerging 'post-political' condition. However, the involvement of professional knowledge and the local micro-politics are potentially institutionalising the site and its practices within the community, a process which may also challenge the social-inclusive nature of the 'post-political' concept.

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FOK Yeung Yeung, Jimmy is a current PhD researcher of School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester. His research interests are cultural use of urban space, heritage management and cultural policy agenda of Hong Kong and Asia-Pacific region. He received his bachelor's degree in Sociology (with minors in History and Anthropology) and MPhil degree in History at the Chinese University of Hong Kong with his recently completed historical research project on the migration and localization history of Hong Kong's Chinese Muslim community which also helped filling the knowledge gaps of Hong Kong's Islamic studies research. He has been rewarded as a 'Hong Kong Scholar' in 2015- a scholarship offered by the HKSAR Government to support his PhD study at Leicester while his on-going PhD project concerns the theoretical transformation of Asian urban studies and Hong Kong's cultural policy agenda in the last two decades. Beside of his academic attachments, Jimmy also joined numbers of major local and national museums previously including Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence and National Museum of China at Beijing as a docent and a collection management assistant to equip himself with practical knowledge of museum education and collection management which has also inspired his research interest on the cultural policy agenda of contemporary Asia.

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## Searching for the Breakthrough in Post-Political City: Creating Inclusive City—The Case of Sharing for Future, Seoul

### **Park Hayun**

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Forced eviction in urban development project areas, protests against developers and policy makers, physical violence against residents by goon quads and gentrification, these scenes are still happening today in Seoul, while contradictorily the administration says it pursues the goal of a sustainable and inclusive city. Scenes of urban violence in post-political city of Seoul are rampant according to many researches and news articles. This article will demonstrate how Seoul embodies the post-political city.

At the same time, there have been many civil society groups that have worked towards preventing and improving the problems from post-political Seoul. Sharing for Future, is one of the representative and leading NPOs which is working towards making Seoul more inclusive through the urban development process and environment improvement projects. The activities of Sharing for Future against post-political Seoul such as anti-eviction activism, securing housing rights against 'New town' policy, coordinating participatory planning, re-commoning projects and their involvement in the policy making process are analyzed within the perspectives of urban transformation and partnerships. Therefore, this article presents how the activities of Sharing for future have differentiated with other NPOs which are dealing with similar issues in post-political Seoul with two criteria. It then concludes with the strategies that Sharing for Future have used to successfully breakthrough in post-political city, Seoul.

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PARK Hayun is a PhD student in the Urban Administration Department at University of Seoul. Hayun obtained her Master's degree in international law and human rights from Hankuk University for Foreign Studies, Seoul, South Korea and University for Peace, San Jose, Costa Rica. Her thesis was completed in 2014 and titled 'Realizing Right to the City in Urban Redevelopment in Seoul.' From 2014 to 2016 she worked for the NGO, Sharing for Future, coordinating resident participation in urban regeneration projects in Seoul.

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## Managing Grievances in the Age of Post Politics: Opposition to the Thilawa Special Economic Zone in Myanmar

### **Tamas Wells**

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Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are transforming cities in Myanmar. The Thilawa SEZ near Yangon is not only transforming the economy and the physical landscape, but is also a site of rapid change in governance. Myanmar has emerged in the last five years from a long period of authoritarian governance where ‘civil society’ resistance to development decision making by government was often suppressed by violence and physical intimidation. In a context of recent reforms, there is now much scholarly debate about the extent of governance transformation in Myanmar—where there is increasing reference to ‘international standards’ of governance, but also persistence of violent tactics against activist groups and communities.

Yet what has received less attention is the ways in which the emerging governance regime—and the increasing reference to ‘international standards’—influences and curtails the political actions of ‘civil society’ groups in new ways. The transformations in governance, as one activist described, from the ‘gun’ to the ‘pen’ has created new technologies that suppress debate and disagreement. While putatively designed to democratize development decision making, seemingly technical instruments such as complaints mechanisms contribute to a new ‘postpolitical condition’ (Swyngedouw, 2009) around SEZs. Based on interviews with activists in Myanmar in 2016, and review of SEZ documentation, this paper argues that diverse ‘civil society’ actors face new political challenges that shape their support of, resistance to, and re-imagining of, Special Economic Zone projects.

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Tamas WELLS is a Research Fellow in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne. His research focuses on meanings of democracy, governance and accountability in Southeast Asia and the role of international aid agencies and ‘civil society’, and he has published widely on these topics in academic and practitioner literature. His doctoral dissertation, completed in 2017, examined the Burmese opposition movement in the lead up to the historic 2015 elections in Myanmar and diverging narratives of democracy within the movement, and amongst its international supporters. Before beginning his doctoral studies, he worked as an aid and development adviser and consultant with various NGOs including Save the Children and Oxfam, and spent seven years living and working in Myanmar.

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## Urban Activism and Civic Space in Post-Political Era: State Actors-Civil Society Relations in Jakarta and Surabaya

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Post-politics in Southeast Asia needs further examination, as there had been multiple waves of national-level political changes in the past three decades. How do rapid urbanisation and growing political-economic role of cities redefine urban activism and civic spaces? Civic spaces refer to spaces of civil society that are relatively free from state and market domination. Using case studies of Jakarta and Surabaya in Indonesia, I will examine changes in urban activism and civic spaces since the *Reformasi* in 1998. My focus will be the transition of state actors-civil society relations in order to understand the evolution of civic spaces and activist strategies, with special attention to heritage and environmental activism. For this paper, I rely on field observations and continuous engagement with civil society groups in both cities. There are at least three major findings: 1) the rise of the consumer class, together with massive post-*Reformasi* urban developments, affects popular expectations of state actors, and consequently affects state-civil society relations; 2) cities' political and economic autonomies, obtained through political decentralisation, intensify uses of urban projects as populist appeal of state actors; and 3) civil society activists, groups, and strategies evolve along with transformations of urban landscapes, state actors, and market forces. Post-politics in Southeast Asia are inseparable from transformations of urban landscapes through development projects, as these transformations often lead to reconfigurations of civic spaces.

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Rita PADAWANGI is Senior Lecturer at the Singapore University of Social Sciences. Previously, she was Senior Research Fellow of the Asian Urbanisms cluster at the Asia Research Institute (ARI), National University of Singapore (NUS). She received her PhD in sociology from Loyola University Chicago, where she was also a Fulbright Scholar for her master of arts studies. She holds a bachelor of architecture degree from the Parahyangan Catholic University. Her research interests include the sociology of architecture and participatory urban development. She is a member of the collaborative Southeast Asia Neighborhoods Network (SEANNET), a four-year initiative for urban studies research, teaching and dissemination through the prism of the neighborhood, funded by the Henry Luce Foundation through the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS). Her upcoming publications are the *Routledge Handbook of Urbanization in Southeast Asia* and *Cities by and for the People in Asia* (with Yves Cabannes and Mike Douglass).

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## Negotiating Political Space within a Rule of Experts: The Dead Fish Controversy in Central Vietnam

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To refer to a post-political condition in the Vietnamese context is somewhat misleading—as it is for much of Southeast Asia—precisely because Vietnam never passed through the liberal-democratic phase that most post-politics theorists use as their main reference point for, in Ranciere’s (2001) words, “proper politics.” Nonetheless, the dilemmas of governing as a single-party socialist state over a globally-integrated market economy and increasingly cosmopolitan citizenry provide for important parallels. One of these parallels is how techno-managerial approaches to governing have become central to state strategies for containing and, ultimately, suppressing political discussion (Swyngedouw 2011, 2010). In this paper, I examine how environmental controversies have emerged in recent years as a key arena for Vietnamese activists to renegotiate the terrain of civil society with the single-party state. In specific, I focus on a controversy over a massive fish die-off in 2016 caused by a Taiwanese steel factory in Central Vietnam. Not only did this incident devastate local fishing and tourism industries across four coastal provinces, it also incited mass demonstrations across the country and exposed deep misgivings towards Vietnam’s continuing reliance on a Leninist political system. Analysis of the dead fish controversy reveals how an increasingly wide array of political voices emerging from civil society have congealed around situations of environmental risk and catastrophe, while also examining how the Vietnamese government has mobilized a techno-managerial approach—what historian of knowledge Stephen Turner (2013) has also called in the Soviet context a “rule by experts”—to manage and do its best to contain them.

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Jason MORRIS-JUNG is a Senior Lecturer at the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), teaching social research, cultural diversity, and environment. He earned his PhD in Environmental Sciences, Policy and Management (ESPM) at UC Berkeley, and he was formerly a Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) in Singapore. Morris-Jung’s areas of research interest examine convergences of environmental conflict, public protest, and online technologies in Vietnam. His articles on Vietnam’s Internet politics, the use of online activism in environmental conflicts, and the re-emergence of public intellectuals through online petitions have been published in *Critical Asian Studies*, *Asian Survey* and the *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*. He also recently edited a volume on *In China’s Backyard: Policies and Politics of Chinese Resource Investments in Southeast Asia* (ISEAS 2017).

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## Politicized Public Participation and Government Responsiveness in Vietnam: Reflections on the Case of Hanoi Tree Movement

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More Vietnamese citizens are getting active in expressing their voices on policies, with many forming strategic networks or groups which have tried to dissolve the boundaries demarcated by the government. However, space for civil society remains ambiguous. Raising the question of the manifestation of civil society in Vietnam, this study aims to analyze a link between the institutions and practices of public participation. This question is explored in relation to collective action against the tree-felling project in Hanoi. This paper looks into the substantiveness behind the case in terms of the influence of legal and policy institutions on civil society.

Through connecting conceptual and empirical explorations, this research examines what the Hanoi tree movement means and how the concept of public participation is exercised or negotiated in Vietnam's socio-political institutions. This study draws on document research and 50 interviews collected in Vietnam in 2017/2018. The thematic analysis method is employed to explore the multi-layered meanings of the relationships between public participation, civil society, and institutions perceived by the government, local organizations, and external development agencies that are engaged in the agenda of Vietnam's civil society.

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KWAK Seohee is currently a PhD candidate researcher at International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Her current research focuses on citizen participation and government responsiveness in Vietnam. She worked as a researcher in the Korean Women's Development Institute and co-authored several publications in Korean on gender and development agendas. With a geographical interest in Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries, her academic interests include democratic/good governance, accountability, civil society, human rights, and state-society relations in the field of international development.

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## Environmental Civil Activism in Authoritarian Central Asia: A/No Need for Post-Politics?

**Reina Artur Kyzy**

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In 2017 than 20 environmental activists were arrested or have been charged with administrative offences in Central Asia due to their civic activism against governmental ignorance of urban environmental issues. Hot disputes, conflicts and repeated protests are becoming a very common communication flows between environmental civil activists and local governments.

In a light of growing urbanization for the last 15 years, administrations of capital cities in Central Asia, such as Bishkek, Almaty/Astana, Dushanbe (etc.) have been taking unpopular and highly contested decisions over cities landscapes and infrastructure or ignoring very urgent environmental issues. Starting with massive tree felling in order to widen the roads for cars, expansion of garbage dumps around cities, ignorance of drastic atmospheric air pollution, to selling the lands in parks and tree zones to private construction companies. Most of these activities were actively confronted by local environmentalist activists as in form of public dialogues, policy proposals, round table discussions, as well as in a form of riots and protests. However, ubiquitous corruption, authoritarian regimes, fragile democracies and other socio-economic problems at both national and local levels have been downgrading local civil society's activity. Nevertheless, environmental activists and NGOs have played a significant role in the development of civil society and post-politics in Central Asia. Environmental civil groups are among the strongest organizations; they have the longest history and have made significant contributions in the development of urban landscapes through collaboration with governments and international organizations.

The proposed paper will be a comprehensive overview of civil society in modern Central Asia with an emphasis on environmental groups, in particular, it will elaborate on 1) conceptualization of civil society, 2) strong and weak cases of cooperation between civil society and governments in post-politics, and, finally, it will raise pro-argumentation on importance of post-politics for environmentalist groups' activism.

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Reina Artur KYZY is a PhD Student at the Otto von Guericke Universität in Magdeburg, Germany, and Visiting Assistant Professor and researcher at American University of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan. Her research interest areas cover, but is not limited, to civil society conceptualization in post-conflict and authoritarian states in Central Asia, democratisation, human rights, gender issues and environmental protection. She is a civil activist and one of the founding members of Feminists' Initiatives in Kyrgyzstan. She has been a peer-editor for the book "Reimagining Civil Society in a time of Uncivil Societies", published in 2017.

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## The Politics of Marketization and Shanghai's Third Sector Development

### Virginie Arantes

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The article discusses the changing role of the state, the market and the society and to what extent a new government welfare mix strategy is reshaping the role of third sector organisations (TSO) in the provision of social services in China. The paper argues that the continuous decentralisation of the government and a neoliberal economic reform gave way to an array of different conditions where civil society is able to develop by filling the vacuum in public service provision left by the government. Basing itself into the historical, economic, political and social context of Shanghai, the paper demonstrates how national, transnational and local factors are shaping emerging environmental networks towards innovative market-oriented strategies to create environmental outcomes. One of the aims of this paper is to describe how a third-sector approach can lay the groundwork to better map the growing diversity of TSOs and civil society in China. Empirical research presented in the article discloses that the strategic choice of several TSOs, specifically, institutionalisation, the choice of issue(s), and (de)politicisation, may either limit or enhance their capacity to make an impact. The article concludes that Shanghainese environmental networks have been actively interacting with a transnational environmental movement, and this has influenced the identification of their issues of concern and the development of their strategies. At the same time, a marketization of the Chinese third sector could also reinforce a neoliberal hegemony and bias their participation goals in environmental governance.

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Virginie ARANTES is a PhD candidate and FNRS research fellow in the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences at the Université Libre de Bruxelles. Her research interests broadly focuses on environmental NGO's, social enterprises and the emerging third sector in China. Virginie's academic background is rooted in Chinese studies, Environmental Management and Sustainability Sciences. For the last 3 years, her research has been focused on bottom-up environmental networks and social innovation practices in Shanghai. She has spent 13 months interacting with a diversity of third sector organisations over a long term field research in Shanghai, analysing how contemporary actors outside the state and the market reshape Chinese political and social sphere. She is also an affiliated researcher at the Centre for the Study of Politics and the Centre for East Asian Studies at the Free University of Brussels. Last year, she was a visiting researcher for a period of 10 months at the Global Institute for Urban and Regional Sustainability in Shanghai (East China Normal University). Since the beginning of 2018, Virginie is a board member of the Young Researchers French Network for Asian Studies.

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## Hong Kong's Divided Civil Society: The Case of the 'Save Our Country Park Alliance'

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Amid growing pressures to build houses on land currently conserved as country parks, conservation activists in Hong Kong have sought to unite under a common banner. The activists argue that the government should prioritize poorly used industrial sites and other land currently controlled by village oligarchs and developers because it is flat and close to public transport. Only a strong united force would be able to counter these forces inherent in the special administrative region's oligarchic and exclusive form of semi-authoritarian regime. Unfortunately, civil society is deeply divided between small but highly active grassroots-oriented activists and larger more consensual post-political organizations that seek to maintain a good relationship with the government. Moreover, there are also a number of international non-governmental organizations such as WWF and Greenpeace which link the local civil society to the global stage. As the alliance to save the country parks unites organizations from divergent camps, it faces obstacles in its campaign and is largely limited to symbolic politics. Nevertheless, activists from the different organizations have still cooperated informally to provide support for various forms of contentious performances, including public protests in country parks and in the city center. This paper will seek to trace how the alliance of disparate activists is trying to achieve the goal of nature conservation while facing a fragmented, undemocratic and executive-centered government as well as powerful economic interest groups.

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Stephan ORTMANN is Assistant Professor in the Department of Asian and International Studies at the City University of Hong Kong. His publications have appeared in many journals including *Asian Survey*, *Journal of Democracy*, *Pacific Review*, *State and Society*, and *Government and Opposition*, and *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*. He is also the author of *Politics and Change in Singapore and Hong Kong: Containing Contention* (Routledge, 2010) and of *Environmental Governance in Vietnam: Institutional Reforms and Failures* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

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## Post-Political Planning and Insurgent Mobilization in the Post-Disaster City: The Experience of Tacloban City, Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan

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This paper discusses the dynamics of post-political planning in Tacloban City, Philippines, a city that was hit by typhoon Haiyan in 2013. After the typhoon caused enormous damage to the city and left behind thousands of casualties in its wake, the local government embarked on a post-disaster urban recovery plan framed within a post-political framework. First, I discuss how the planning process imposed a post-political condition anchored on technocratic planning, as well as the construction of climate change as an externalized threat to the city. The post-disaster recovery plan of the city is based on capitalist competitiveness and environmental sustainability while foreclosing possibilities of antagonistic politics from civil society. Second, I argue that the post-political manifestation of engagement between the local state and civil society organizations in the aftermath of typhoon Haiyan stems from two conditions in the Philippine setting: first, an institutional framework that privileges civil society cooperation with the state and second, a long-standing distrust towards civil society organizations as fronts for radical political activities. Lastly, I highlight the case of social movement organizing of disaster survivors affected by typhoon Haiyan as a form of insurgent mobilization that aims to open up a political moment rendering visible the actors and claims that have been hidden within the post-political condition.

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Dakila Kim P. YEE is Assistant Professor of Sociology at the Division of Social Sciences, University of the Philippines Visayas Tacloban College. He graduated with a Master of Arts in Sociology degree from the University of the Philippines Diliman. His research interest cover disaster politics, disaster justice and the production of neoliberal spaces and subjectivities in post-disaster cities. His most recent publication appeared in the journal *Critical Asian Studies*. He was recipient of the Asian Graduate Student Fellowship (2016) at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore.

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## Risk Governance in Metro Manila: De-Politicising State-Civil Society Relations in Crafting Housing Resilience for/with the Poor

### Emma Porio

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The 1990s decentralization and democratization movements saw the rise of civil society engagements with the state in crafting/implementing its social reform agenda. Partnership with civil society was the key in making urban governance an effective foil for the rising informality in Metro Manila and other rapidly urbanizing areas (Karaos 2018; Porio 1997, 2004). But the increasing climate disasters (e.g., Ketsana 2009, Haiyan 2013) that inundated millions of urban-rural poor had led to shifting spaces of power (Porio 2012) in state-civil society engagements, revealing the complexities of urban governance in the era of climate disasters and heightened state-capital partnerships. Mayors, for example, have taken hold of their constituencies by employing democratic-laden strategies like “networked governance practices” (Porio 2017). While multi-stakeholder engagements have defined housing-land acquisition initiatives, lately public-private partnership agreements seem to articulate the ascending power of governments, private sector and external NGOs (see Porio, 2017). Examining the housing-land initiatives of six NGO federations, this paper argues that state-civil society engagements have been reconfigured by 1) increasing climate disasters, 2) entanglements with external NGOs and local governance systems and 3) rising tensions within/without. While CSO partnerships with external NGOs/local governments have advanced the “land, housing and livelihood” agenda of the poor, it had also “blunted” civil society’s “relatively autonomous spaces” to erode the oppressive tendencies of both capital and the state. In conclusion, the concept, “negotiated resilience” (Chu, 2017; Porio 2017) allow understanding of how local-national leaders craft risk governance strategies while building housing-livelihood resilience among the urban poor, highly exposed and vulnerable to climate disasters.

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Emma PORIO is professor of sociology at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology (DSA), School of Social Sciences, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines and Science Research Fellow at the Manila Observatory. Under her leadership (1996-2002; 2008-2014), the DSA has been named by the Commission of Higher Education, a Center of Excellence for Sociology (1999-2002; 2012-2015). She has headed different social science organizations, including the Philippine Sociological Society, Philippine Sociological Review and the Philippine Social Science Council. Under DSA’s “Livable Cities, Sustainable Communities Research and Advocacy Program”, Prof Porio has focused her research on 1) urban governance, 2) climate change adaptation- resilience/livelihood security of the poor, 3) gender, power and resource management. She represents the International Sociological Association (ISA) in the Board of Directors of the Global Development Network (GDN), a global network of policy-oriented researchers and in the International Science Council (ICSU), the global union of scientists. Currently, she is the project leader of “Investing in Climate and Disaster Resilience, 2018-2020”, an inter-/trans-disciplinary action research project involving 15 scientists from the hydro-meteorological, social, planning and industrial sciences, with funding support from the IDRC. Her publications include, “Vulnerability, Adaptation and Resilience among Marginal, Riverine Communities in Metro Manila”, *Climate Adaption in Metro Manila: Challenging Governance Systems and Urban Poor Needs in Metro Manila*”, “Drought and Urbanization: The Case of the Philippines”, just to mention a few.

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## Upward Direction: A Case Study of the Mother Earth Foundation (MEF) as Post Political Force in Philippine Local Government on Zero Waste Practice

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The emergence of civil society as a major actor in governance was highlighted in sustainable development. Thus, multi sectoral participation became a major component of Philippine governance. Though, populist politicians, clientelist, and reformists dominate the Asian states, none of these three, addresses the long term need of garbage problem in the Philippines. In spite of the legal frameworks, waste continues to move in a linear waste stream and political will is lost along the way.

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In the Philippines, post politics is exemplified though in the decentralized system where Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) are able to engage with the Local Government Units (LGU). Illustrating a case study, the upward linkage between Mother Earth Foundation (MEF) NGO and the City of San Fernando (CSF), Pampanga was able to craft the low cost, low technology, local material recovery facility of the zero waste programs at the city level. Crafting ordinances on waste recovery, with a scoresheet strictly monitored by the communities, MEF and CSF, waste diversion from the landfill is high. Using interviews, focus group discussions and observations as methods, the study aims to relate how MEF through its 10 point approach program able to cross this transition.

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Ronald M. CASTILLO currently teaches political science courses at the Faculty of Arts and Letters of the University of Santo Tomas, Manila. He is a research associate of the Research Center for the Social Sciences and Education (RCSSSED) focusing on political institutions, networks, and social capital. And is a member of the Mother Earth Foundation.

Arlen ANCHETA is a faculty member at the Faculty of Arts and Letters; research associate at RCSSSED focusing on sustainability studies; member of Mother Earth Foundation; team lead of the research team on Economic and Social Benefits of Zero Waste.

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## Contested Landscape: Heritage Politics in Urban China

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Influenced by European conservation movements, the Chinese state has deployed heritage as a cultural and political tool to regulate national identity, value and conduct of citizens. As a powerful instrument in reinforcing national identity, heritage in China creates and strengthens social relations, values, and meaning about a nation's past and present. In this paper, I draw on the interrelation between heritage and urban renewal in Xi'an to examine various urban heritage practices and the responses from local communities. I argue that the language of heritage and ethics written in heritage policies has contributed to redefine the meaning of culture in urban governance. In this process, new standards and norms have emerged to constitute what people know about good, beauty and appropriateness.

However, local residents/social groups sometimes negotiate their identity through daily life encounters with the reinvented built environment. These practices are not the result of a passive adoption of global and national ideas of heritage; rather, they arise from different value systems, which are competing with each other against the background of the country's political, social, and economic transitions. By approaching heritage as a space of cooperation, negotiation and contestation, this study contributes to an understanding of the contested and plural nature of heritage in the rapidly shifting urban landscape of contemporary China.

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ZHU Yujie is a Lecturer at Center for Heritage and Museum Studies, Australian National University. Yujie is interested in the politics of cultural heritage, and its relation to issues like tourism, material culture, urban history, and religious practices in China. He is the author of *Heritage and Romantic Consumption in China* (Amsterdam University Press 2018) and the co-editor of *Politics of Scale* (Berghahn Books 2018) and *Sustainable Tourism Management at World Heritage Sites* (UNWTO 2009). He has also published more than thirty articles that appeared in leading anthropology, tourism, and heritage journals, including *American Anthropologist*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, and *International Journal of Heritage Studies*. In addition, Yujie is an executive committee member of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies (ACHS).

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## ‘Connecting Emotions through Wells’: Heritage Instrumentalisation, Civic Activism and Urban Sustainability in Quanzhou, China

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Under China’s Belt and Road Initiative, the coastal city of Quanzhou in China, once hub of the maritime Silk Road facilitating exchanges between China and the world, is experiencing a renewed interest in its history and heritage. Different stakeholders within Quanzhou have been mobilising their cultural heritage for different agendas, producing complex ramifications for Quanzhou and its people. One such effort is the ‘Connecting Emotions through Wells’ project, a community-led initiative to preserve and revitalise the old wells located within the Tongzheng community district in Licheng District. In February 2018, the community action group for the project successfully lobbied the Quanzhou Provincial Government for a funding of RMB 50,000 to implement a pilot project to open up and promote the old wells located within the area to promote community engagement, urban improvement and heritage tourism. Based on an ethnographic study of the project, I examine how heritage discourses, particularly historical narratives and local place histories relating to these wells, are being mobilised by the community action group and other stakeholders, including the government, businesses and residents, within the ongoing political, economic, social and cultural processes that traverse local, national and global scales to advance their respective agendas, and the cultural politics of this instrumentalisation. In doing so, I demonstrate how urban heritage has the potential to reconfigure existing networks and power structures between the local, national and global levels, and examine their impacts on people and places.

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CAI Yunci is Lecturer in Museum Studies at the School of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester. She completed her PhD in Museum and Heritage Studies at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London (UCL), in November 2017. Her PhD thesis 'Staging Indigenous Cultural Heritage in Malaysia: Instrumentalisation, Brokerage, Representation' explores the politics of heritage instrumentalisation at four indigenous cultural villages in Malaysia. Her PhD research was fully funded by the UCL Overseas Research Scholarship (ORS) and the UCL Graduate Research Scholarship (GRS). She is currently working on a monograph based on her PhD thesis. She holds a Master of Arts with Distinction in Museum Studies from the UCL Institute of Archaeology, and a Bachelor of Social Sciences with First Class Honours in Geography from the National University of Singapore (NUS). She has research interests in the cultural politics and museologies in and of Asia. Her most recent project explores the politics of heritage instrumentalisation along the maritime Silk Road under China’s Belt and Road Initiative. She has published in academic journals such as *The International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, and *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum*; as well as book chapters in *Routledge Handbook of Urbanisation in Southeast Asia* (2018), *Citizens, Civil Society and Heritage-Making in Asia* (2017) and *Essays in Singapore’s Legal History: In Memory of Professor Geoffrey Wilson Bartholomew* (2009).

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## Up, Down, Horizontal, and Outward: Network Directionality of Hybrid Institutions in Malaysia's Urban Heritage Governance

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The State of Penang has often been associated with the vibrancy of its civil society organizations (CSOs), which have spearheaded conservation efforts in its historic center of George Town over the past thirty years. The nomination of George Town as a World Heritage Site resulted in a series of neoliberal conservation policies which brought new investments in the flourishing tourism industry. In this context, scholarship often addressed the role of CSOs, neglecting the role of hybrid institutions in the management and promotion of heritage conservation and urban renewal. This study fills this gap by comparing the governance strategies, organizational structures, collaborative networks, and resources of Think City and George Town World Heritage Incorporated—both hybrid organizations. We argue that the collaborative networks of both organizations are ‘upward’ (linking civil society with local and national governments), ‘outward’ (linking directly with transnational organizations), and ‘downward’ (allowing governments to extend their reach into civil society). Additionally, we argue that while hybrid institutions such as GONGOS in China are associated with tight governmental control, the hybridity of these organizations reflects an innovative approach towards neoliberal governance. By becoming hybrid, they bypass typical bureaucratic constraints faced by government departments without losing the authority, avoid resource constraints typically faced by CSOs, and become more dynamic and effective in dealing with other stakeholders. However, despite the gains in addressing Penang's heritage conservation issues, this post-political dispersal of power has not yet translated into the empowerment of the grassroots.

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Angela TRITTO is a Research Associate (awaiting to finalize her PhD and be a Post-Doc) at HKUST's IEMS institute, working on a HK government-funded research project on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). She is currently producing a series of case studies on Southeast Asian countries as part of a collaborative book project on BRI, which analyze trade and investments resulting from the Initiative. She studied her Doctor of Philosophy degree at City University of Hong Kong, investigating environmental management practices in World Heritage Sites in China and Malaysia. She is currently working on a few publications stemming from her PhD thesis and on a contribution for an upcoming book on ICT for sustainable tourism in UNESCO WHS. Her past publications include, among others, a paper on eco-innovations in Jiuzhaigou National Park, a book chapter on collaborations in the management of George Town World Heritage Site, and a short contribution for a recent UNESCO WHITRAP conference on preserving the valley system of Shaxi Town, Yunnan, China.

YEW Wei Lit obtained his PhD degree in Asian and International Studies from City University of Hong Kong. Based disciplinarily in comparative politics and environmental studies, his research broadly focuses on the contentious politics of civil society activism in Northeast and Southeast Asia. Dr Yew was a Visiting Assistant Professor at the Department of Asian and International Studies, City University of Hong Kong. He received his MSc in Comparative Politics (Asia) from the London School of Economics and his BIT from Multimedia University (Malaysia). Dr Yew has also published in journals such as *China Information* and *Pacific Affairs*.

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## Post-Politics of Heritage Discourse: A Case Study of Shahdara, Delhi

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In recent years, there have been many political and economic debates on 'heritage discourses', and its role in urban heritage conservation. The post-politics of heritage shape the way that the histories of contested cities are created (State 2012), based on what is remembered and what is forgotten. Most of the literatures suggest that the heritage and conservation professionals play an important role in controlling decisions through the heritage discourse. In this context, my present work studies the traditional monuments and *bazaars* of Shadara that are the major site of economy generation. The cultural monuments of Shahdara are identified by the people themselves that can be renovated and conserved based on their cultural practices and innovative skills.

Based on participant observation and in-depth interviews this research tries to deal with two broad research questions that how a community heritage discourse plays an important role in holding on, adopting and negotiating everyday practices and occupations. The second research question deals with the 'politics of heritage conservation' by civil society and government agencies in no one cultural monuments and heritage site has not been included in the list of ASI and INTACT from Shahdara. Such ignored, neglected places are seen as legacies of a past that they associated with personal experience and influences their utilization of the city today. The conservation of cultural heritage is the responsibility of local communities are how they maintain or promote it or ignore it, depends on them.

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Pratibha TOMAR is a research scholar, and she recently completed her MPhil in Geography from Department of Geography, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi. Her MPhil thesis explored the Spatial Transformation and Development of Cultural Economy of Shahdara, Delhi. Her research interest lies in the domain of Heritage Studies Urban Studies and Cultural Geography. She attended XVI Biennial IASC-Conference on 'Practicing the Commons: Self-Governance, Cooperation, and Institutional Change' (July, 2017), Utrecht, Netherlands. She enjoys traveling, dancing and exploring different cultural spaces through unique photography.

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## Farming as Urban Heritage: By-Pass Governance in Urban South India

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This contribution looks at what I call ‘farming-as-urban heritage’ as one of the dominant tropes in Indian urban civil society’s imaginations of alternative forms of urban governance. Farming here indexes as much a collective local heritage, as it does a more holistic environmental awareness and a decisive break-away from unsustainable urban lifestyles. By pursuing a livelihood based on farming and its contingent ways of living, urban educated elites tap in to and circulate ideas about governance—decentralized locally sourced production, egalitarian peer-to-peer food chains, grassroots pedagogies, and bottom-up environmental awareness.

This paper is based on anthropological fieldwork in Chennai. Chennai accommodates strong aspirational undercurrents of alternative urban living, typically crystalizing around ‘organic’ food, and a return to ancestral farming lifestyles—particularly among the city’s population of IT engineers. The claim of this paper is that non-institutionalized ‘return-to-the-land’ networks like these, help propagate and give shape to alternative forms of governance, seeking to bypass conventional knowledge dissipation, stymied political networks, and stratified communal interaction.

It holds that if the post-political is to be used as a form of analytics, then such disparate yet widely-entangled networks of knowledge circulation should be considered as parts of urban civil society. As expanding urbanization threatens to stamp out converted heritage farms, their networks offer a crucial way to understand the changing relations between conventional top-down urban governance institutions and widely circulated, but hardly formalized ideas of how to make urban life livable and govern one’s (urban, middle-class) future in it.

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Karl BEELEN is an architect and urban designer by training. He received his PhD in urbanism from Eindhoven University of Technology and was a post-doctoral research fellow at IIT-Madras (Chennai, India), during which he initiated the Bypasslab, a research & design workshop focusing on peri-urban frontiers of urbanization in India (Chennai, 2016). His research engages with the cities of Chennai and Amsterdam and carries a particular interest in grassroot urbanisms and ‘everyday’ notions of design. His PhD examined the implicit, erasive urbanisms emerging in the margin of infrastructural logistics and urban planning. He is currently a lecturer and researcher at KIT Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.

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## About the Chairpersons and Organisers

**Tim Bunnell** is based in the Department of Geography at the National University of Singapore. He is also Chair of the Global Urban Studies cluster in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Tim's research centres upon issues of urban development in Southeast Asia, and that region's global connections. His latest books are *From World City to the World in One City: Liverpool through Malay Lives* (Wiley, 2016) and *Urban Asias: Essays on Futurity Past and Present* (Jovis, 2018 – co-edited with Daniel P.S. Goh).

**Mihye Cho** is an Assistant Professor at Singapore University of Technology and Design. She received her PhD in sociology from Bielefeld University, Germany. Her research areas include neoliberal socialization, post-industrial and post-political urbanism, creative city, ageing, and multidisciplinary urban design. Her monograph on entrepreneurial subjectivity, *Entrepreneurial Seoulite: Culture and Subjectivity in Seoul* (University of Michigan Press) is now in press. She has edited a book on ageing in Asian cities, *Creative Ageing Cities: Urban Design with Older People in High-density Asian Cities* (Routledge, 2018). She has published journal articles and book chapters on academic socialization, post-political urban governance, urban heritage conservation, liveability, age-friendly city, and creative city in Asian cities. Currently she is working on a multidisciplinary research project, *New Urban Kampung* where social scientists, engineers, architects, data scientists, and urban planners research urban design for supporting quality of life at public housing estates in Singapore.

**Creighton Connolly** is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Asian Urbanisms Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. He is an urban and cultural geographer, whose research focuses primarily on contestations over urban (re)development, and environmental governance in Peninsular Malaysia. Creighton received his PhD in Geography from the University of Manchester in June, 2016, where he was a member of the European Network of Political Ecology (ENTITLE). His PhD thesis, *A Landscape Political Ecology of 'Swiftlet Farming' in Malaysian Cities* examined the contested emergence of urban swiftlet farming (cultivation of edible birds' nests) in Malaysian cities, and the socio-ecological transformations involved. Creighton's previous MA research was conducted at the Memorial University of Newfoundland which focused on Singapore's role in the global trade and traffic in electronic waste (e-waste). He has published this work in various journals, including the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* (IJURR), *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, *Journal of Political Ecology*, *Cultural Geographies* and *Geoforum*. Creighton's current research at ARI examines civic responses to the controversial Penang Transport Master Plan (PTMP) and associated land-reclamation and hillside development projects on the Island, and their socio-ecological implications. He is also working on a National Heritage Board funded project on integrating approaches to cultural and natural heritage conservation through a case study of Singapore's Southern Islands. Creighton's work is participatory in nature, developed in collaboration with local actors, which aims to have policy as well as social implications.

**Sonia Lam-Knott** is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Asia Research Institute of the National University of Singapore. She was awarded a doctorate in Anthropology from the University of Oxford for her research on youth activism in Hong Kong, which looks at the emergent political subjectivities and the changes in state-civil society relations in the contemporary era. Her current research explores the socio-political ambiguities in post-1997 Hong Kong, viewed through the lens of heritage politics, nostalgia, and the vernacular city.

**Hamzah Muzaini** is a cultural and historical geographer with strong interests in social and spatial theory particularly as applied to heritage, memory and remembrance. His primary research area centres on how heritage associated with the Second World War is currently (and historically) commemorated in Singapore and Malaysia, although he has also published on backpacking and 'dark tourism' in Southeast Asia, international peace and heritage museums, Singapore's transborder geographies and histories, and 'new nature' in the Netherlands. His current research looks at the phenomenon of 'heritage from below' or forms of (non-state) memory and heritage produced and consumed on the ground or within more intimate spaces that are not highly visible and so very much at risk. This will be empirically accomplished through his (field)work on/with war memoryscapes and cultural theme parks within the region, as well as migrant Southeast Asian communities in Europe and elsewhere. Hamzah received his PhD in Human Geography in 2009 from Durham University (UK). He was a heritage consultant, licensed tour guide and curator of the Changi Chapel and Museum (Singapore), Research Associate at Durham University (UK), Visiting Fellow at the Department of Geography, National University of Singapore (NUS), and, until recently, Assistant Professor with the Cultural Geography chair group of Wageningen University (the Netherlands). Dr Hamzah joined the Southeast Asian Studies Department family at NUS in August 2016 and has been teaching courses related to Southeast Asian heritage, vice, and socio-cultural landscapes in Southeast Asia. He is co-author of *Contested Memoryscapes: The Politics of Second World War Commemoration in Singapore* (2016, Routledge) and *After Heritage: Critical Perspectives of Heritage from Below* (forthcoming, Edward Elgar).

Trained as an urban sociologist at the University of Chicago, **Ho Kong Chong's** research interests in neighbourhood and community development, heritage and place-making, the political economy of cities as well as a more recent interest in higher education. Much of his published work is on East (Hong Kong, Seoul and Taipei) and Southeast Asian (Bangkok and Singapore) cities. Recent publications include "The Neighbourhood Roots of Social Cohesion: Notes on an exceptional case of Singapore" *Environment and Planning C* (2018, with Chua) "The Cultivation of Research Labour in Pacific Asia" *Asia Pacific Education Review* (2018, with Ge Yun) and "Discrepant Knowledge and InterAsian Mobilities: unlikely movements, uncertain futures" *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* (2018, with Francis Collins). Forthcoming publications include *Neighbourhoods for the City in Pacific Asia* with the University of Amsterdam Press, 2018/2019.

**Michelle Ann Miller** is a Senior Research Fellow at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. She is interested in intersections between governance, human conflict and environmental change. Her current research on transboundary environmental governance in Southeast Asia draws inspiration from work on the commons/ commoning to explore participatory pathways for sustaining shared resources and addressing cross-border threats and crises. Her recent publications speak to contemporary theoretical debates and key policy issues in decentralisation, environmental governance, urban change, and citizenship and belonging.

**CP Pow** is Associate Professor in the Department of Geography and an Assistant Dean in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. His research is anchored in urban studies with specific focus on globalization and urban social transformations in Asian cities. One of his ongoing research projects examines the role of urban diplomacy and infrastructural development in Asia. He is currently an Editor of the *Urban Geography* journal (*see here for submission* <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rurb20/current>) and serves on the Board of Trustees for the Urban Studies Foundation (USF). The Foundation awards competitive grant funding for innovative research projects globally (*see here for funding opportunities* <https://urbanstudiesfoundation.org/>).

**Ian Rowen** is Assistant Professor of Geography and Urban Planning at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. A Fulbright Scholar (2013-2014), his work on culture, politics, and place-making has appeared in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Asian Anthropology*, *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, *The New York Times*, the *BBC Chinese*, *The Guardian* and elsewhere. He has delivered invited talks at institutions including Stanford University, SOAS University of London, the University of California Berkeley, and NYU Shanghai. He has been a Visiting Scholar at Fudan University (China) and Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen (Germany) and a postdoctoral fellow at Academia Sinica (Taiwan).

**Deasy Simandjuntak** is a political anthropologist and Visiting Fellow at ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute. Her main research interests are patronage democracy, identity politics and local politics in Indonesia. She completed her PhD in 2010 at the University of Amsterdam, with a dissertation on "Patronage Democracy in Indonesia", with North Sumatra as case study. She was a post-doctoral fellow at the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) Leiden and Van Vollenhoven Institute at University of Leiden in 2009-2014 and guest fellow at Freiburg University in 2011. She was a lecturer at International Relations Department of University of Indonesia in 2006. Some of her important publications are "Gifts and Promises: Patronage Democracy in a Decentralized Indonesia" in *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 2012, and "Milk-Coffee at 10 AM: Encountering the State through *Pilkada* in North Sumatra" in Van Klinken and Barker (eds) *State of Authority: The State in Society in Indonesia*, New York: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publication, 2009. Her most recent publication is "Doing Anthropological Fieldwork with Southeast Asian Characteristics? Identity and Adaptation in the Field" (with Michaela Haug), in Huotari, Rüländ, Schlehe (eds) *Methodology and Research Practice in Southeast Asian Studies*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.