

Dissertation Workshop on ***THE CHALLENGES OF AGRARIAN TRANSITION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA***

30 May to 1 June 2008, Los Banos, Laguna, Philippines

The Challenges of Agrarian Transition in Southeast Asia (ChATSEA) project and the *Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture* (SEARCA) invite applications from Masters and Doctoral students to participate in an interdisciplinary **Dissertation Workshop**.

THE WORKSHOP

This workshop is intended for masters and doctoral students from any university whose dissertation projects engage with agrarian transitions in Southeast Asia. The purpose of the workshop is to encourage and assist post-graduate students who are just beginning work on these issues, as well as those who are further along in their projects. The format will involve intensive, collegial and open group discussion of the individual student projects, and with the theoretical and methodological issues which they raise.

The workshop will take place over three days in the SEARCA facilities, in Los Banos (Laguna, Philippines). The on-site costs of the workshop, meals and accommodations, will all be covered by SEARCA and ChATSEA. There will also be small travel grants available for regional flights to Manila.

AGRARIAN TRANSITIONS

Over the last twenty years, the literature on agrarian and rural relations has been marked by an explosion of innovative theoretical approaches, many of which are inspired by the analytical challenges posed by globalization. New research on diverse themes such as space and geography, identity, commodity chains, gender, agro-food systems, class, power and the production of knowledge, regulation and certification (both private and public), political ecology and various kinds of network theory, have brought about dramatic shifts in the way that central terms such as *rural*, *community*, *market*, *nature*, *state*, and *development* are understood. Southeast Asia has been a key region for innovative theoretical insight and practical engagement with agrarian studies.

At least six sets of processes at the core of the agrarian transition may be identified. These are: 1) agricultural intensification and territorial expansion; 2) increasing integration of production into market-based systems of exchange; 3) accelerating processes of urbanisation and industrialisation; 4) heightened mobility of populations both within and across national borders; 5) intensification of regulation, as new forms of private, state and supra-state power are developed and formalized to govern agricultural production and exchange relationships; 6) processes of environmental change that modify the relationship between society and nature to reflect new human impacts and new valuations of resources.

This framework serves as the conceptual basis for the broader ChATSEA project and will aid in the discussions of the research proposals and projects at the workshop.

FACILITATORS

The Dissertation workshop will be facilitated by faculty resource persons drawn from the ChATSEA project. These will include: Philip Hirsch (University of Sydney), Philip Kelly (York University), Michael Leaf (University of British Columbia), Tania Li (University of Toronto), Pham Van Cu (Hanoi University of Sciences), Jonathan Rigg (University of Durham), Peter Vandergeest (York University), Chusak Wittayapak (Chiang Mai University), Doracie Zoleta-Nantes (University of the Philippines)

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants should be enrolled full time in a masters or doctoral program. They must have drafted a dissertation research proposal, although it may not yet be approved by their committees. Applicants will need to prepare materials in advance of the meeting, namely reading and sending commentaries and questions on the proposals of other participants, to establish the basis for productive exchange.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications consist of three items:

1. A current curriculum vitae.
2. An 8 to 10 page double spaced dissertation proposal. Alternatively, if the work is well underway, an 8 to 10 page double spaced description of the specific issues being addressed, the intellectual approach, and the materials being studied. For candidates in the thesis write-up stage, a chapter can be submitted but should be supplemented by a short description of the whole thesis project to allow readers to grasp the context of your work.
3. Any requests for travel funding with a budget proposal (up to CAD \$400 may be available for student travel costs).

Workshop participants will be selected on the content of the submitted projects, the potential for useful exchanges among them, and the benefits of including a range of disciplinary approaches and intellectual traditions. Acceptance notes will be sent to applicants by March 15, 2008.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 28 February 2008

Application materials should be sent to the ChATSEA coordinators by email, losbanosworkshop@yahoo.com

For further information:

- concerning the workshop and eligibility: please contact Keith Barney (kbarney@yorku.ca)
- concerning the ChATSEA agrarian transitions project: please visit [their official website](#)
- concerning SEARCA: please visit [their official website](#)