

CALL FOR PAPERS, FIRST WORKSHOP (PHASE 1)



Tuesday, 22 June 2010

CALL FOR PAPERS – PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS AND NEW APPROACHES TO BUILDING MARKETS IN ASIA (Phase 1)

A research stream within the New Approaches to Building Markets in Asia project of the Centre on Asia and Globalisation's Poverty and Development Programme

The Centre on Asia and Globalisation recently launched a new research project entitled 'New Approaches to Building Markets in Asia'. The project is located within the Centre's Poverty and Development research programme and is headed by Toby Carroll, with the support of Rita Padawangi and Darryl Jarvis at the National University of Singapore. 'New Approaches to Building Markets in Asia' incorporates an empirically and theoretically-oriented research agenda, a signature seminar series and various outreach initiatives – including a working paper series and website for hosting project output. Crucially, the project seeks to establish an international network of scholars working on mutually complementary research from within multiple social science disciplines.

This call for papers is for phase 1 of the project, 'Public Organisations and New Approaches to Building Markets in Asia'. This phase is centred upon the production of an edited volume and/or special issue of a journal produced from papers presented at a workshop to be held in Singapore from April 17-18, 2011. The phase also incorporates submissions to be presented within a new seminar series (to begin November 2010). Funding has been secured to support the attendance (airfare, accommodation, per diem) of authors of successful paper/seminar paper submissions.

Phase 1 Research Focus – Public Organisations and New Approaches to Building Markets in Asia

Public organisations, such as the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and development and export credit agencies from developed countries, are playing increasingly important roles in constituting markets in the name of poverty reduction and development. While these organisations are popularly-known as sources of finance, they also perform crucial legitimising and risk mitigating roles, and bring with them an array of conditions and safeguards beyond those of regular financing streams. This research agenda seeks to elucidate the pivotal, yet often little-understood roles that international organisations play in constituting markets across different sectors in Asia and the various impacts of and upon such activities. Notably, such organisations are increasingly central players in constituting markets in high-risk/high-return areas (such as extractive industries, water and energy) – where political, social, economic and

environmental factors present cause for concern but where significant opportunities for profit exist. In such settings, the involvement of international organisations with sovereign relationships and financial backing provides the private sector (especially private sector finance) with confidence that a particular project will encounter fewer problems (renationalisation etc) than would otherwise be the case. But more than this, the international finance organisations also require that certain regulatory structures are established and safeguards applied, ostensibly to reduce risk to various actors and with significant implications for both state and society. Even in relatively 'benign' sectors such as health and education international institutions are deploying new strategies to re-craft social and political spaces. In essence, organisations such as the IFC, bridging the public/private 'divide', are playing central roles in the constitution of new market regimes that seek to expand market activity while also controlling the nature of that activity through new regulatory/risk-mitigating arrangements.

This said, the involvement of these organisations in constituting market societies is often far from straightforward. One issue relates to the ability of the safeguards deployed by agencies to be effective in protecting local populations from the impacts associated with implementing projects (issues over land compensation for a pipeline project, for example). Concerns also relate to the negative ongoing consequences of market constitution projects (the empowering of corrupt elites resulting from the flow of oil revenues and the exacerbation of inequality, for example). Further, the wider policies and conditions that international organisations such as the IFC tie to providing assistance can also be controversial, particularly on delivering on the promises of development and poverty reduction – promises that such organisations are mandated to deliver on.

Given all of this, the 'Public Organisations and New Approaches to Building Markets in Asia' research agenda asks several core research questions. Firstly, what novel roles are international public organisations playing in constituting markets in Asia and how do these roles relate to risk? Second, what impact do such roles have on different actors? Third, how do particular actors impact upon the efforts of international organisations? Finally, what are the implications for civil society actors, policy makers and different political groups of the answers to the aforementioned questions? The agenda seeks to extend the work of existing political economists, political geographers, legal theorists and sociologists to understand the impact of public organisations on different social, political and geographical spaces.

Original/exclusive contributions from a variety of social science disciplines/frameworks are sought for both inclusion in an edited collection (to be published with a publisher such as Routledge or Palgrave Macmillan) and the project's seminar series. The contributions for the edited collection will be presented at a workshop to be held at the National University of Singapore from **April 17-18, 2011**. The contributions for the seminar series will be presented on a monthly basis from November 2010 onwards. Contributions to the seminar series will be published online in the New Approaches to Building Markets working paper series and may also be included in the edited volume/special journal issue.

A preference exists for original case study-oriented material that is analysed using a clear theoretical framework and which refers to existing literatures in political

economy, political geography, legal theory and sociology/social anthropology. Crucially, it is essential that each contribution look at the relationship between foreign (to the countries in which said organisation operates)/international public organisations and the constitution of particular market regimes in Asia, with specific reference to a notion of risk. The convenors of this project understand the new approach to constituting markets as one that is premised upon international public organisations deploying particular risk mitigation strategies to limit risk – first and foremost, to themselves and capital. This reduction in risk can occur simultaneously with an increase in risk to citizens (heightened vulnerability for populations, exposure to the repercussions of certain patterns of development etc.). This said, contributors are open to interpret risk in a variety of ways and decide upon their own specific theoretical framework. ***However, each contribution must make some assessment of how risk operates in relation to the new market constitution project operating in Asia.*** With this caveat in mind, contributions can deal with any aspect of the public institutions noted above and their role in constituting markets in Asia. For example, the work of the World Bank Group in encouraging mining codes that stipulate certain safeguards (as forms of risk mitigation) would be a valuable contribution. The role of a participatory process (sold as avoiding risk to communities and/or project progress) in a bilaterally-funded river improvement project or the dynamics operating between environmental and social impact consultants and the Asian Development Bank would all be relevant cases for the project. Likewise, the efforts of MIGA/IFC in mobilising capital (reducing risk for capital via sovereign/political relationships) for a particular mega project or the work of export credit agencies (providing sovereign backing) in opening up particular sectors would also be important contributions. Finally, the tensions or otherwise between the ILO's approach to constituting labour markets and that of the World Bank, both of which promise to have various potential impacts upon risk to workers and capital, would also dovetail neatly with the project's goals.

Contributions should range from 8,000-11,000 words (inclusive of notes and references) for all written submissions. Successful applicants for both the workshop and seminar series will be supported with airfares (return economy class to Singapore), accommodation and per diem. Contributors to all components are expected to solely contribute their presented output to one of the project's components (edited collection/working paper series etc.).

Phase 1 components requiring contributions

Abstract for paper for April 2011 workshop/edited volume: 150-300 words

Submission deadline: August 15, 2010

Abstract for seminar series (January 2011-on): 100-150 words

Submission deadline: Ongoing

Any questions regarding the project should be directed to Toby Carroll at the Centre on Asia and Globalisation, National University of Singapore: tcarroll@nus.edu.sg