The Việt Nam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), Nantes University, École française d’Extrême-Orient (EFEO) and Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) have decided to hold a social sciences summer university called “Tam Đảo Summer School Week” as part of a partnership agreement for the period 2010-2013. The objectives of this partnership are to develop multidisciplinary training of an excellent standard, to create a policy discussion platform and to attract a large academic and non-academic audience from the entire Southeast Asian region.

This book is a verbatim transcription of the plenary sessions and workshop presentations and debates on the issues surrounding transition, held from July 16 to 24, 2010 in Hà Nội and in the hill station of Tam Đảo. The concept of transition was studied in various situations according to four principal themes: i) agrarian transition, ii) economic transition through both quantitative and qualitative analyses, iii) field study methods in social anthropology of development, iv) demographic transition and familial transformation.

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Transitions Decreed, Transitions Experienced
From Global to Local: Methodological, Cross-cutting and Critical Approaches
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The analyses and conclusions presented in this document are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of AFD or its partner institutions.

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Foreword

Regional “Tam Đảo Summer School Week”: A Valuable Training Platform

The first Social Sciences Summer School was held in 2007 as a part of the “Fonds de Solidarité Prioritaire en Sciences Sociales” (FSP2S) project “Support for Research on Economic and Social Transition Issues in Việt Nam”, implemented by the “École française d’Extrême-Orient” and the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences. [1] It was established because the Joint Franco-Vietnamese Scientific Council within the FSP2S organization had observed the need for capacity-building for researchers, teaching researchers and Vietnamese doctoral candidates, covering methodology, survey tools and data treatment. Held again in 2008 and 2009, the “Journées de Tam Đảo” (Tam Đảo Summer School Week) – also known as JTD – maintained its objective of introducing future Vietnamese social scientists to the intellectual tools and know-how necessary to gain a rigorous knowledge of social reality and to provide them with the theoretical and methodological basis to draft a scientifically pertinent research project. The sessions were held in Hà Nội and in Tam Đảo, a hill station near the capital, and resulted in the publication of three works published in both French and Vietnamese. [2]

2010-2013: An Agreement for Partnership, Change on a Regional Scale

Given the success of the first three years, and in order to support the development of the Summer School, the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), the University of Nantes, the École française d’Extrême-Orient (EFEO) and the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) decided to confirm their combined commitment in a partnership agreement signed on April 15, 2010 at the AFD headquarters in Paris for four years, 2010-2013.

S. Lagrée (editor), Les Journées de Tam Đảo. Nouvelles approches méthodologiques appliquées au développement (2), Université d'été en sciences sociales, Éditions Thế Giới, Hà Nội, September 2009, 401 p. (French version), 398 p. (Vietnamese version);
This partnership aims to maintain the continuity of the Tam Đảo Summer School Week with previous training sessions with the general objectives of:

- supporting multi-disciplinary training of an excellent standard: improving knowledge, methods and survey tools in the social sciences; reinforcing capacity for the analysis of economic and social changes; consolidating skills in methods for evaluating the impact of development projects;
- constituting a policy discussion platform, as well as developing a pool of researchers open to the Southeast Asia region: the JTD was conceived as a forum for the study of strategies, methods and working practices in development, but also for training and exchanges between researchers and decision makers;
- developing the profile and appeal of the “Tam Đảo Summer School Week;” the JTD aims to attract a wide academic and non-academic audience throughout Southeast Asia.

Building on the evaluations of the three first years, the regional project 2010-2013 also has new ambitions:

- a specific theme of a regional or international nature is set each year, then elaborated and debated according to different methodological and cross-cutting approaches;
- at the VASS, the first two days of training and discussions conclude with a synthesis session which kicks off multi-disciplinary consideration by discussing proposed methodological tools; this part of the program is designed to be an introduction to the thematic workshops;
- in Tam Đảo, the four workshops, each attended by around twenty participants for five days, are followed by a one-day plenary session, for synthesis; in this way, participants and trainers meet at the end of the week to share and present the output of each workshop;
- in order to increase geographic appeal, the Tam Đảo Summer School Week welcomes researchers and participants from Southeast Asia. This regional expansion notably reinforces visibility in the region and allows a larger network for exchange and scientific collaboration. The audience is composed of approximately fifty Vietnamese participants and around thirty from the region (Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand and other neighboring countries).

**An Annual Trilingual Scientific Production**

It is proposed to publish the proceedings in three languages – Vietnamese, French and English – the year following each training session in the AFD series, *Conférences et Séminaires*, co-edited by the EFEO and the Tri Thúc publishing house. Each work is available on CD Rom and as a free download on the site www.tamdaoconf.com as well as on the sites of the partner organizations. To complement this, www.tamdaoconf.com also offers the texts of lectures to expand and deepen understanding of the themes and fields touched upon, an in-depth biography of each trainer as well as a triple evaluation provided by the trainers, participants and reporters.
“Transitions Decreed, Transitions Experienced”

The guiding principle of the 2010 JTD was to question the concept of transition by looking at the wide variety of situations that it covers, according to the teaching model described below:

− July 16 and 17 at the VASS: four presentations introduced and developed the methodological and cross-cutting approaches to the theme of transition; a documentary was shown to complete the training. The sessions were concluded by a synthesis report of the two days;

− four themed workshops took place for five days at the hill station, Tam Đảo, from Monday, July 19 to Friday, July 23. These studied in greater depth the agrarian transition (workshop 1), economic transition through the lenses of quantitative and qualitative analysis (workshop 2), field study methods in development anthropology (workshop 3), demographic transition and familial transformation (workshop 4);

− plenary day for reports from the workshops Saturday, July 24 in Tam Đảo.

The Tam Đảo Summer School Week began with an introductory lecture by Nicolas Zufferey, sinologist, professor at the Chinese Studies Unit at the University of Geneva. The presentation began by comparing an ancient transition period in China – between the 6th and 2nd century B.C. –, with a recent transition – from 1978 – experienced by contemporaries as such. The second part looked at three distinct dimensions of the theme of transition: historical, psychological and ideological.

The morning continued with a presentation by the geographer, Rodolphe De Koninck. The subject of his presentation was the agrarian transition, understood to be the shift from an agrarian society to a society based increasingly on industrial production and services. His intervention was focused on the countries of Southeast Asia, where the process is underway throughout the region, but displays original and specific characteristics in each country, and above all has complex and sometimes unique consequences, as in Thailand for example.

At the beginning of the afternoon, the documentary “A qui appartient la terre?” (To Whom Does the Land Belong? – subtitled in French) was shown in the presence of the director, Đoàn Hồng Lê, and shed light on the land problems that exist in Việt Nam today. This theme was a direct link with the training workshop on socio-anthropological field surveys in the foothills of Tam Đảo.

The second day of plenaries started with a thorough examination of the labor market transitions in Việt Nam, using a double macro- and micro-economic interpretation. Given by Jean-Pierre Cling, Christophe Gironde, Mireille Razafindrakoto and François Roubaud, the presentation looked at the questions of urbanization and labor market dynamics from the end of the 1990s, comparing the characteristics of employment in urban and peri-urban areas with a special look at the informal sector. The results presented were based partly on representative statistical surveys carried out on a national level and in Việt Nam’s political (Hà Nội) and economic (Hồ Chí Minh City) metropolises, and partly on local level studies in two districts of the Red River delta.
The conference cycle ended on the theme of transformations of the institution of family in Europe. Sociologist Martine Segalen highlighted the diversity of family systems in European peasant societies, linked to systems of succession, as well as the effects of industrialization on family relations and the deep-seated transformation of society starting in the 1960s.

Finally, at the beginning of the afternoon, Olivier Tessier, anthropologist and member of the ÉFEO in Hà Nội, brought the first two days to a close with a critical conclusion.

The training continued with four workshops held in Tam Đảo, 80 km from Hà Nội.

Workshop 1 was an extension and deeper exploration of the ideas brought up in the plenary session by Rodolphe De Koninck. Essentially, the training focused on the different processes of the agrarian transition: agricultural intensification and territorial expansion; urbanization, industrialization and migration; environment, integration into markets and intensification of regulation. These transformations were examined from the point of view of four “conceptual windows” – globalization, actors, subsistence, spatiality – which linked to a large international research project entitled “The Challenges of Agrarian Transition in Southeast Asia”.

Workshop 2 examined the economic transition in Việt Nam that started at the end of the 1980s in a particularly innovative way through an inter-disciplinary approach to its different facets in both qualitative and quantitative terms. One of the major objectives here was to use economic and anthropological analysis tools to discover how the population experiences and perceives the changes taking place on an individual level by studying their migratory and professional trajectories. In order to apply this multi-disciplinary approach in the field, qualitative surveys were conducted among small business owners and craftspeople for a half day at the hill station.

Workshop 3 was dedicated to training in survey methods and field practices in socio-anthropology, with a focus on the issues, tensions and conflicts surrounding land appropriation and use. The workshop set a twofold objective of introducing survey tools and methods and applying them in real time in the field. The research centered on land issues emerging from the “top-down” establishment of a tourism project by following up a series of qualitative interviews held since 2008 with local actors: villagers and authorities at the commune, district and province levels.

Workshop 4 consisted of a training session on demographic transition and family transformations. The emphasis was placed on three major lines of study: presentation of the demographic transition theory complemented by an introduction to new approaches using biography analyses (African case studies); possible ways of bringing together demographic approaches most often operating at the macro-scale and ethnological practices operating at micro-sociological levels (Southeast Asian case studies); analysis of family transformations through an ensemble of demographic, sociological and cultural data (European case studies).
Principal characteristics of the themed workshops held during the JTD 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshops</th>
<th>Scale / Level of Analysis</th>
<th>Fields</th>
<th>Tools / Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-1- Agrarian Transition</td>
<td>Multi-scale</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Windows of observation: globalization, conditions and means of subsistence, territoruality, institutions and actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2- How is the economic transition experienced and perceived by the population?</td>
<td>National scale, macro and micro approaches. Unit of analysis: individuals</td>
<td>Economics, socio-anthropology</td>
<td>Analyses of statistical surveys, quantitative and qualitative approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-3- Training in survey methods and field practices in socio-anthropology</td>
<td>Local scale: communes and villages. Unit of analysis: household and individual surveys</td>
<td>History, socio-anthropology</td>
<td>Qualitative interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-4- Demographic Transition and Familial Transformation</td>
<td>Macro, meso and micro scale</td>
<td>Demography, sociology and anthropology, ethnology</td>
<td>Biographies, case studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The four workshops were designed to be attended by participants from different fields, the priority being to allow everyone to use the most open approaches and tools possible. This intention to bring together points of view in a multi-disciplinary way was fulfilled during the last day of reporting, Saturday, July 24. All of the participants were able to exchange and discuss their conclusions, leading to an extremely rich and animated debate. As is customary in this type of training, a certificate of participation and attendance signed by the VASS, AFD, IRD, EFEO and University of Nantes, was given to each participant at the end of the session.

Finally, to support and accompany their work, in the evening of July 23 the participants watched a 52-minute documentary film made in 2008: “Rêve d’ouvrière” (Worker’s Dream), presented and commented upon by the director Trần Phương Thảo (with subtitles in French). The documentary was made available by the Ateliers Varan and provoked a discussion among all the participants on the difficulties of professional placement for young rural people coming to work in the factories near Hà Nội.
Profile of Interns 2010

Choosing the participants for Tam Đảo Summer School Week becomes more selective each year, and in a way, this is cause for celebration! Nearly two hundred applications were made in 2010, but only 84 candidates were chosen for the entire training, less than one out of two applicants. This selection was deemed necessary in order to preserve a strong group dynamic and to maintain a relevant pedagogical approach during the workshops.

The enrollment forms show a very differentiated set of profiles:

– a higher proportion of women: 64% of the participants;

– a young audience: more than one out of two participants was under 30 years old, 75% under 35 years old;

– diversity in degree status and level of education: holders of Master’s degrees (35) including seven teachers; doctorates (12) including two teachers; researchers and/or teaching researchers (31); development practitioners most often with research or teaching activities (6);

– multi-disciplinary: sociology, anthropology and socio-anthropology, economics, statistics, demography, geography, history, legal sciences;

– diversification of geographic origins of the Vietnamese participants: although Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City supplied the majority of the participants (30 and 25 respectively), many Vietnamese interns also came from the provinces of Lào Cai (3), Lai Châu, Thái Nguyên (2) and An Giang, Binh Duong and Bình Thuận (1 from each);

– a wide reach across the Southeast Asian region and beyond: Cambodia (12), Thailand (4), Laos (3), Malaysia (2) and “free auditors” from Canada, France, Switzerland, Cambodia and Việt Nam;

– an institutional pluralism:

  • Việt Nam: Việt Nam Academy of Social Sciences, University of Hà Nội, Southern Institute of Sustainable Development, Institute of World Economics and Politics, Ethnology Museum of Hà Nội, Institute of Statistical Science, ONG ENDA Việt Nam, Institute of Population and Society, Institute of Anthropology, Institute of Research on Religions, University of Economics in Hồ Chí Minh City, EFEO, Center for Urban and Development Studies (CEFURDS), National Economics University, An Giang University, Binh Duong University; Thái Nguyên University, Culture, Sports and Tourism Service in Lào Cai, Hoa Sen University, Medical College in Bình Thuận;

  • Cambodia: Royal Academy of Cambodia, Royal University of Law and Economics in Phnom Penh;

  • Laos: National University of Laos, Faculty of Environmental Science, Faculty of Economics and Management;
• Thailand: Mahidol University, Rajabhat University, Thammasat University, ÉFEO Chiang Mai;

• Malaysia: National Defense University, Insititute of the Malay World and Civilization;

• Outside of Asia: University of Provence Aix-Marseille, University of Montréal and Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva.

Stéphane Lagrée
Acknowledgements

The institutional synergy sealed by a four-year partnership agreement gives the Tam Đảo Summer School Week a regional reach on the scale of Southeast Asia and beyond, and for this we would like to thank: Việt Nam Academy of Social Sciences, Agence Francaise de Développement (AFD) – Research Department, École française d’Extrême-Orient (ÉFEO), l’Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD) – Direction for the Program for Research and Training in the South, Nantes University as well as the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie.

This publication is indebted to Philippe Cabin for his recommendations and it is important for us to thank Support for Knowledge Management at AFD for the quality of our exchanges with them.

We extend all of our gratitude to the entire team of trainers for their scientific and pedagogical contributions during the organization, execution and improvement of this year’s Tam Đào Summer School Week: Philippe Antoine, Pascal Bourdeaux, Jean-Pierre Cling, Christian Culas, Jim Delaney, Bernard Formoso, Christophe Gironde, Rodolphe De Koninck, Danielle Labbé, Emmanuel Pannier, Phạm Văn Cự, Mireille Razafindrakoto, François Roubaud, Martine Segalen, Olivier Tessier, Bruno Thibert and Nicolas Zufferey.

The work involved in transcribing the sessions and workshops is a particularly long and arduous task, and our thanks go to those who made the effort to provide such quality texts: Jean Verly, plenary sessions (ESC Rouen and diploma in modern literature at Paris-Sorbonne); Lena Kéravec, workshop 1 (diploma from Rennes University II and from the Institut Régional du Patrimoine-IRPA); Glenn Pian, workshop 2 (diploma from Rennes University I); Emmanuel Pannier, workshop 3 (doctoral student in anthropology, University of Provence); Viviane Ériksen, workshop 4 (doctoral student in anthropology, University of Provence).

Finally, we would like to congratulate the interpreters and translators who have accompanied this 2010 JTD: Anne McElroy-Arnaud, S&S Translation; Lê Thanh Mai, Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Lê Thu Huong, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva; Lý Văn Anh, Diplomatic Academy of Việt Nam; Ngô Thị Hồng Lan, National Economics University; Nguyễn Thị Cúc Phương, Hà Nội University; Nguyễn Viết Tiến, National University of Hà Nội; Phạm Thị Kim Yến, Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trần Thị Phương Thảo, Hà Nội University.
Opening Remarks

Nguyễn Xuân Thắng  
*Vice President of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences*

Yann Martres  
*Deputy Director, AFD Việt Nam*

Jacques Boulègue  
*University Professor, Representative of IRD in Việt Nam*

Yves Perraudreau  
*University Professor, Head of Việt Nam and Southeast Asia Mission, Nantes University*
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Participants from Việt Nam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Malaysia,

First of all, in the name of the Việt Nam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), I would like to present my warmest wishes to all of the guests, teachers, and participants of the 2010 meeting of the Tam Đảo Summer School Week.

As you may know, our academy has partnered with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the context of the Funds for Priority Solidarity in Social Sciences (FSP2S) project, “Support for Research on Issues of Economic and Social Transition in Việt Nam.” The VASS and its French partners multiply their efforts to organize many training sessions linked to research projects. This year, our theme is “Transitions Decreed, Transitions Experienced” which we look at using different scales of observation.

Since the implementation of Đổi Mới, Việt Nam pursues its reforms towards a market economy with socialist components and the reinforcement of its international integration. It is actively present in different international situations and in January 2007, it became the 150th member of the World Trade Organization. This integration imposes various internal reforms that aim to improve the judicial system as well as establish and put into place a new economic framework adapted to the international context. This transition period must allow for the intensification of exports and the exploitation of the domestic market in order to develop strong value added sectors, drivers of growth, without over-exploiting resources.

Today, Việt Nam faces many challenges. It is centering its pursuit of economic modernization on industrialization and the modernization of agriculture. Transition is still a difficult task despite the undeniable progress in poverty reduction, social security or in the development of essential services in rural areas.

We greatly appreciate the experience of our international colleagues. The knowledge acquired from the four corners of the globe will allow us to improve our methodological and multi-disciplinary approaches, thus contributing today to a more practical vision of the concept of transition. We believe that sustainable development must also integrate notions of cultural identity and political stability; we are convinced that the 2010
objectives for this Summer School will be attained in this regard.

We are happy to see this event open up regionally to our friends from Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Malaysia. This expansion is essential because it strongly underscores our desire to contribute to the development of the Mekong region, in this part of Asia between India and China. It is fundamental that the students take full advantage of these exchanges to question the national and regional economic transition. Beyond the specifics, our problem is identical: sharing knowledge is a pledge of the reinforcement of policies and of the regional cooperation in Southeast Asia.

I would like to extend my best wishes for good health to all of the participants. May the 2010 meeting of the Tam Đảo Summer School Week be crowned with success.

Thank you.
Mr. Vice President of the Việt Nam Academy of Social Sciences, Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) to participate in and partner with the Tam Đảo Summer School Week 2010. Support for research, in particular in the social sciences, is one of the Agency’s major objectives.

The AFD is a public funding agency which works with the Việt Nam authorities on the issues of development. Of course, our motto is “sustainable development,” and the theme of transition is familiar to us. However, absorbed as we are by our daily routine, this type of event is very useful to us. It allows us to take a step back, learn, ask or revisit questions, unceasingly reformulate our ideas, get away from our preconceptions, establish more timely strategies, and accept contradiction and debate. Thanks to the organizers of this event, thanks also to the speakers and participants some of whom have traveled far to be here with us. Welcome to Việt Nam for those of you who are discovering the country for the first time.

It is an extraordinary opportunity to organize a seminar on transition today in Việt Nam. It seems to me to be a vast and complex issue. You will surely not exhaust the subject entirely during your work. However, you will put a certain number of questions, problems and issues on the table and I do not doubt that your efforts will elicit rich and complementary analyses and will result in publications.

From our viewpoint as a donor, we experience Việt Nam’s transition daily. We see it, we accompany it, we cause it, and we follow it. Unfortunately, we don’t anticipate it often enough. This is where your work can help us. We try to sketch out some lines, to support change, but it is clear that we are always a bit behind in our knowledge and understanding of the changes that are happening, especially on a social level.

I also think that you will have some debate on the definition of transition. I would not be able to give a complete definition. It seems to me that there is a temporal dimension: comprehension of time, phases, periods, determination of a beginning and an end, long time, short time. In Việt Nam, while we feel that we are experiencing a transition, it is still difficult to define it. There are different rhythms, that of the economy, of society, of collective time, of the individual, of the city, of the country. The policy of renewal initiated in Việt Nam in 1986 provides a date for the beginning of the transition, whether in theory or in reality. It is clear that the country is evolving, with the concept of transition itself,
in a way, held sacred. The country’s status has shifted from that of a poor country to a middle-income country, and this is the subject of debate within the donor community (because this means changes in the nature of international aid). The many different aspects of this issue will surely keep you busy long after the Summer School Week 2010!

I would like to go back to the format of your meeting: the wide range of participants, and the rich resources of each, will make sharing your views a very enriching research process. We understand and completely support this approach because we use it ourselves, employing specialists of all kinds within our Agency so as to have a collective and multi-disciplinary approach which matches our projects. In addition, the networking of researchers on a regional level and beyond offers fascinating prospects. It is a great asset, which will be recognized and built upon over time.

Thanks to you all, enjoy your work and I wish great success to the Tam Đảo Summer School Week 2010.
Mr. Vice President of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences,

Colleagues,

It is always a pleasure for a physicist to address an assembly of researchers in the social sciences. You must think that physics is made up of certainties, whereas the little knowledge that I have of the social sciences leads me to believe that in this domain, certainties are not always well established.

Since transition is a term used frequently in physics, I would like to make some suggestions from the viewpoint of my field of study. My specialism is thermodynamics, which analyzes the final and initial states of a system. Between these two states, there are paths that go from the initial state to the final state: they describe transition. Classical physics does not like transition because it signifies a divergence in behavior away from the equations describing the states of matter.

Take vaporization for example. If you observe a pot of boiling water, you will see bubbles rising from the bottom to the top of the pot. The theory is that boiling happens instantaneously, which is clearly not the case. There is turbulence, there is mixing of liquid and vapor bubbles. This could possibly be expressed by an equation, but only by using mathematical tools few people have heard of. In short, wide-ranging heterogeneous systems – maybe a bit like societies – experience transitions that are very difficult to study because they can be violent and uncontrollable.

Like you, physicists come up against problems. People talk about climate change; from this point of view, we are in a period of transition. My personal opinion is that we know very little. We know even less because the principal greenhouse gas is not carbon dioxide, nor methane, nor nitrous oxide; it is water. Little is said of this because in models of the future climate, which are supposed to set limits for the economy and societies, we are incapable of describing the role of clouds, i.e. the changing of water from gas to liquid – the opposite of boiling. You may find this surprising, but this is the main reason for the uncertainty of climate evolution; the physicist, like all researchers, must remain humble.

I know that there are many uncertainties in the evolution of societies and in the way in which they are observed. Remember that even in a so-called hard science, such as physics, and its
application to large-scale systems, we come across the same uncertainties.

Since 1986, Việt Nam has been able to manage a transition in a way that makes it an example for many developing countries. I hope that results still to come will be such that the Vietnamese government, which was fully aware of its situation in 2009-2010, will achieve the progress envisaged for 2015.

The Institute for Development Research (IRD) is also developing because it is in transition. In fact, on June 3, 2010, the French government slightly changed the status of the IRD, and we hope, before the end of the year, to be able to present what will be the “final state” of the IRD in a strategic plan for 2010 to 2025.

Recently, the president of IRD, Michel Laurent, met with the president of the VASS, and one of the outcomes was to confirm that at the end of the Vietnamese government’s next planning period 2011-2020, the IRD will no longer have any reason to be in Việt Nam. Indeed, the country will be, if we get the results we want, a stable society and no doubt a member of the G20. Let’s hope that we reach that situation. I think that your debates will contribute to this evolution, and I hope that the IRD, which will no doubt act as a coordinator of collaborative research in countries outside of the G20, will also succeed in its transition.

Thank you for your attention.
Presidents, Directors, Ladies and Gentlemen
Doctoral Candidates, Dear Colleagues,

I am much honored to participate in this opening session of the latest meeting of the Tam Đảo Summer School Week, and I would like to thank you sincerely. I find it particularly touching, both professionally and personally, for five reasons.

Firstly, on behalf of Nantes University and its president, Yves Lecointe, we are very happy to be here for this latest meeting. Our presence signals our cooperation, on which we signed a document recently, and which we consider very important. We hope that it will succeed and bring the expected benefits to all involved – doctoral candidates, teachers, professors, researchers. This cooperation was a particular wish of Yves Lecointe who is very committed to opening Nantes University to international projects. My presence last December at the Doctoral Seminars came a few days before the participation of researchers from Nantes University in a colloquium with Hà Nội University of Science and Technology (HUST). For two days, our seminars and workshops addressed methodologies in science, humanities, social sciences and languages, in order to prepare our upcoming cooperation in the doctoral program. Our university regularly participates in projects and partnerships as part of its international cooperation policy. In addition, we promote the decentralization of some of our Master’s programs.

Many components of Nantes University are present in Việt Nam, thanks particularly to our previous president, François Resche, through agreements with Vietnamese universities, for example in health (Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City), odontology (Hà Nội), science and technology (Đà Nẵng and Cân Thơ), economics and management (Hà Nội and Hải Phòng). Last December, a large delegation led by our vice-presidents Françoise Lejeune and Jacques Girardeau was here as a show of our commitment.

The theme of this Summer School Week is fascinating. As director of the finance-banking-insurance and maritime logistics departments, I wanted to highlight our presence through four Master’s programs in economics and management. Therefore, as a teacher and researcher, I am happy to participate in this cooperation. The finance department has “Institut Universitaire Professionnalisé” (IUP) status, delivering courses in theory and professional instruction so as to train future executives to be able to produce diagnoses and strategic solutions,
or even apply operational recommendations. Although the research element is less significant than in other Master’s programs, some of our students do go on to obtain doctoral degrees, which was the case for some Vietnamese students who have just received their diplomas with a specialization in banking.

Nantes University’s participation has been made possible through the warm welcome extended by the founding parties of the Tam Đảo Summer School Week. I would like to thank them all and in particular, Stéphane Lagrée, who, as a former student of Nantes University, has personally facilitated the implementation of this cooperation.

Finally, I am personally happy about this cooperation on two levels; as a teacher – I have taught for 30 years in higher education and this experience brings me fresh ideas and a renewed interest in learning new things – and as an individual, since I promised myself twelve years ago that I would come back to see your beautiful country.

Thank you. I am happy and honored to be among you and with you in this mutual project. I wish health and success to all the researchers here at this Tam Đảo Summer School Week 2010.
Map of localisation

Source: Tomorrow Media.
Part 1
Plenary Sessions
1.1. Transition: Epistemological thoughts on the Chinese Example

Nicolas Zufferey, University of Geneva

(Re-transcription)

I would like sincerely to thank the Việt Nam Academy of Social Sciences as well as all of the workshop partners and in particular, Stéphane Lagrée. I am very happy to be in Việt Nam; this is my first visit.

I am new to this area in two ways: first, my field of study does not cover Việt Nam or Southeast Asia; second, I am not a specialist in sociology or economics, fields which seem to me to be more in tune with the concept of transition. I am an historian of China, so I will speak primarily about China, and I will avoid any implicit or explicit comparisons with Việt Nam. Today, many Chinese think that Việt Nam is ten years behind China in development, which is a common perception that is frequently repeated in the Chinese media, even if the subject of Việt Nam in and of itself is rarely brought up. It is obvious that this opinion is simplistic, to say the least. Certainly there are similarities, notably political systems that call themselves socialist and undertake economic reforms that are sometimes similar, but there are also clear divergences, for example the size of the states. More fundamentally, I hope that Việt Nam will not follow the example of certain recent Chinese reforms or practices, such as the destruction of Chinese cities. Peking has been subjected to much destruction during the last few years, especially before the Olympic Games. I hope that this beautiful city, Hà Nội, will not suffer the same fate.

The structure of my presentation is as follows. I will first give two examples of transition in China: one very ancient transition, and the present one. Then I will address some more conceptual and methodological questions: What is transition? How can we understand it in a larger historical context? Finally, I will emphasize a point that seems to me to be of paramount importance in China today: the ideological dimensions of transition, which are often invoked by politicians as an excuse for inequality or delay.
1.1.1. Two Examples of Historical Transition in China

The first transition that I will speak about is very ancient, because it started in the VIth century BC and lasted until the IInd century BC, thus four to five centuries long. The second transition I will address starts in 1978-1979, with the beginning of reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, eight years before the beginning of the Vietnamese đổi mới; the interval of time between the two is something that the Chinese remember well and which partially explains certain simplistic Chinese ideas about Việt Nam.

Despite the modernization resulting from both these transitions, it is clear that the similarities between them are outnumbered by the differences, not the least of which is duration: the transition in China at the end of the first millennium BC was much longer and slower than the current, brutal transition. It could seem paradoxical to use the word "modernization" to describe changes that are so ancient, but in fact, between the VIth and IInd centuries BC, China shifted from a "feudal" state – in the western historical sense, and not the Marxist sense – to an imperial system; from a very segmented system with states joined by loose, Suzerain-vassal type links, to an administration in the modern sense of the word. In the IInd century BC, China had an administration that some would compare to the French départements of today: civil servants (prefects, etc.) were nominated by the central imperial court, and held responsible only by this court. I emphasize the fact that this very ancient transition displays eminently modern aspects. The important contrast rests in the fact that this five-century transition was not experienced as such by most of the actors of the time, even less so by the populations that saw it as an economic or moral crisis or even a decline. To invoke such an ancient transition presupposes the hindsight of an historian, who is capable of distinguishing an anterior and a posterior state, the transition being precisely the unstable phase between the two.

This transition constitutes the first of three great transitions in Chinese history (cf. for example Jacques Gernet) the second is what we call the Song Period Renaissance between the Xth and XIIth century, and the third is the modern period.

This first era begins at the time of Confucius (551-479 BC), at the end of the troubled "Spring and Autumn" era, and lasts until the Warring States period, marked by constant wars. These conflicts can be explained not only by economic and demographic changes (strong population growth), but also by changes in production tools (shifting from bronze to iron). For the most part, this transition ended with the Qin dynasty, founded in 221 BC by the first emperor, Qin Shihuang. This sovereign led many reforms, moving to some extent with the direction of transition, which partially explains the success of his kingdom which ended up conquering all others. In current debates on reforms in China, it is possible to find similar ideas on the forces that go along with history, and those that oppose it – and which are thus destined to fail, according to the Marxist dialectic.

The conditions anterior to the Warring States transition typify a feudal type model, with quasi-familial links between the different principalities that pledge allegiance to the Zhou royal dynasty, but for the most part remain autonomous. The beginning of this dynasty is considered to be a golden age,
a vision that is debatable in the eyes of historians, but which left a rather positive image in Chinese posterity. Then comes a period of wars between the principalities, which gradually become independent kingdoms. The feudal state as I have defined it above is in a grave crisis. Little by little, nobles that occupy principal positions in the court are replaced by other personalities that are not all from nobility, but who are selected increasingly for their competence. Therefore, we witness a change in the selection process which spans several centuries, but is nevertheless perceptible from one generation to the next: gradually, selecting civil servants using recruitment systems – some of which are somewhat close to the modern system, such as the start of an exam-based system – replaces a system based on heredity. Let us note the parallel with China of recent times, with consideration here also of the selection of civil servants, and more open mechanisms of promotion, to the detriment of the ancient quasi-hereditary system of the Communist Party.

Transition periods are often synonymous not only with institutional crisis, but also with deep moral crisis with negative, but also positive effects. The crisis of values was extremely brutal during the Warring States period, but at the same time, it was extraordinarily fertile on an intellectual level. Times of crisis can be worrisome, troubling but nevertheless exciting. Once again, we can draw a parallel with China of recent times, with consideration here also of the selection of civil servants, and more open mechanisms of promotion, to the detriment of the ancient quasi-hereditary system of the Communist Party.

Let’s revisit some of the principal changes which occur during this first period of transition: moving from the bronze age to the iron age, from a splintered feudal system to a centralized and administrative imperial system. We shift from many “Chinese” States, to a certain Chinese cultural unity. After a state of relative peace and stability under the Zhou royalty, a period of intense military action was then followed by a return to a relatively peaceful stage, a sort of pax sinica in the Chinese empire, which lasted four to five centuries – up until the fall of the Han in 220 AD, or until 1911 depending on the different interpretations.

Intellectuals alive during the Warring States period adopt different views on this crisis. I will only mention two principal intellectual movements out of all that we could identify: the Confucianist attitude and the Legalist attitude.

- The Confucianists are conservatives and consider the transition they are experiencing as a moral crisis and decline. Their goal is to block this decline and to return to the order that reigned at the beginning of the Zhou feudal dynasty. Confucianism is, from this point of view, a form of conservatism and is radically opposed to Legalism.

- The Legalists propose a theory of State that will be put into place in the territory of Qin, which unifies “China” by force and creates the empire in 221 BC. The Legalists are therefore the architects of this imperial unification, of paramount importance for the rest of Chinese history. The Legalists are known for having put punitive laws into place – they use capital punishment
very widely for all sorts of crimes, even minor offenses – but they differ from their predecessors by making law universal and public. From this point of view, their idea of the law is much more modern than that of the Confucianists. In fact, Confucianists favor morality and rituals, and mistrust the law. Even though there were rudimentary laws in ancient times, they were considered to be secondary to values such as loyalty, linked to the ethics of nobility. In contrast, the Legalists go as far as rejecting morality in order to put their legal system into place, and by doing so, clash with conservative forces.

As I have pointed out before, this transition is not perceived positively by the majority of its contemporaries, notably by the Confucianists who consider the political crisis of the time above all as a moral crisis. Their objective is to return to an ancient ideal through the education, rituals and institutions of the Zhou era. Several times, Confucius states that he has invented nothing and that his objective is simply to return to the spirit of the golden age that is the feudal state, away from which China is moving.

In contrast, Legalists accept the reality of change. They have a Malthusian vision of society: according to them, the rise in population creates pressure on resources, which in turn causes conflicts and wars. The modern state must react and adapt, since the old system and traditional morality are not suited to new historical conditions. One necessity is to reinforce the government and the army, in order to be able to resist neighboring states, and to be well placed in the struggle for resources to satisfy the population’s needs. Reforms are therefore necessary. Legalists point to the old-fashioned nature of their opponents’ ideas and methods. History proves them to be partially right, since all of the states that refuse or fail to adapt are gradually vanquished and dominated by the Qin kingdom.

One Legalist trait that seems to me to be fundamental is their consciousness of change. Although they do not use the term “transition”, they have a program of reforms that they energetically attempt to put into place, and a discourse that accompanies these reforms. They start to display an ideology that justifies political measures that favor passing from one state of being to another: state intellectuals and theoreticians make very practical suggestions to adapt the political system to the undeniable facts of social change and the increase of the Chinese population. Historians consider that the Legalists accelerated the transition by intervening in a decided, decisive and sometimes brutal manner.

We therefore have two opposing positions, one that goes along with history – as it has been reconstructed by historians – and the other that goes against it, resisting change. It is telling that the Chinese Maoists have very often considered Legalists as examples, whilst keeping their distance from Confucianism.

From the point of view of its actors, this age is extremely brutal. We have many accounts, notably in the dynastic histories, where the population complains not only of economic changes – such as the lack of employment in the countryside which forces rural people to come to the cities – but also moral changes – the moral failing of a son who abandons his parents, etc. These accounts do not evoke transition or progress but, on the contrary, a crisis. The point of view of the actors is very different from that of historians who have a
tendency to obliterate the negative aspects of these troubled periods.

The current transition in China is omnipresent in public debate, academic conferences, publications and the media. If you type the Chinese word for “transition,” zhuanxingqi, into Google, you will find millions of results. It’s a term which is truly part of the discourse and generally has positive connotations, especially when it comes from political decision-makers.

The transition in progress since 1978 has actually been taking place for a much longer period, because China entered a phase of change as early as 1839-1842 with the first Opium War, marking the beginning of the crisis of the ancient imperial order. The century from 1839 to 1949 is sometimes characterized as a century of entry into modernity, but it is also one of the blackest centuries in Chinese history: internal and domestic crises, war with the British and the French, war of resistance against Japan, civil war... all in a context of imperialism and western colonialism. Looking at a shorter time period, the Communist Party sometimes presents the current reforms as the outcome of a process started in 1949 with the founding of the socialist state. Finally, it’s worth noting that the transition since 1978 is a transition entirely accepted, declared, active; it is the object of much debate and reflection, notably regarding the differences between transition in the broad sense of the term and "small" transitions – demographic, social, cultural, economic, etc.

In the academic and conceptual sense of the term, whether in the West or in China, there are numerous theoretical hypotheses which contextualize this transition very broadly, sometimes with contradictory hypotheses.

According to the Marxist doxa, China is still in a great transitional phase of capitalism and socialism. And yet, certain speeches by Jiang Zemin, the former Chinese president, intimate that China was already in a socialist phase, and that the transition had been completed. Chinese intellectuals, some of whom voluntarily use the term “post,” sometimes speak of transition from Leninism to post-Leninism, or of a shift from pre-modernity to post-modernity. A certain number of authors, notably in the universities of Beijing, enjoy saying that China has simply bypassed the modern era, as is demonstrated by a large part of the population obtaining portable phones directly, without going through the “intermediary" phase of having land-lines. According to another hypothesis, which we hear more often in the West, China is in the process of going from socialism to capitalism. We cannot deny that this idea is somewhat pertinent, even if the Chinese have a tendency to refute it by referring to the transition itself to justify any excess committed by a sometimes uncontrolled capitalism.

Here are some examples of transition that are not necessarily directly linked to each other, but which are all widely studied by sociologists, economists and political scientists, both Chinese and from the West:

- the institutionalization of political succession: switching from a system where succession takes place from within the party (often as a reward for fidelity to the party) to a more open system founded on competence. In the middle and upper echelons of today’s Chinese government, civil servants are in general very well trained, often in western schools, which is a change from the past. Therefore, there is a distinct transition in the system of succession;
- market liberalization, which is still ongoing, contrary to what we may sometimes believe. More than 50% of the economy is still in State control, sometimes indirectly. The markets are opening up gradually, which has consequences, notably for employment. For many Chinese, transition is synonymous with unemployment, a situation which has lasted for many decades now. Officially, unemployment is between 15% and 20%. In fact, and according to western criteria, it fluctuates between 30% and 40%. Today in Beijing, it is not uncommon to see four people working in one bus – one driver and three controllers. These people could be unemployed tomorrow without any real future opportunities. The authorities take this major problem into account;

- there are interesting changes on the social level, notably in the villages. Formerly, marriages occurred between villages. But because of the splintering of traditional solidarities and the disengagement of the government from local and provincial economies, families are increasingly forced to recreate local solidarity. The single child policy – and thus the importance of boys to the detriment of girls – also plays a role. These combined factors incite certain families to find a son-in-law in a neighboring family in the same village, who will in some ways fulfill the function of son. These situations result in major social changes;

- I also point out questions which are more peripheral, but which are also symptomatic, such as the “resinization” of literature. Chinese literature was very westernized until the 1980s. These days, certain writers try to find more Chinese phrases, tone and themes.

Some of these transitions are accepted and voluntary, others are much more involuntary. The change from employment for all, to unemployment is obviously not a transition that was chosen. The government puts relief measures into place, but these transitions remain extremely problematic. Changes concerning marriage in the villages sometimes have consequences, even medical consequences, and the government has a limited amount of power to act on these issues. In other words, if some transitions seem to be very much under control, others seem to be out of control. We could also note that all transitions are not synchronous: some transitions which appear to be interdependent do not in reality happen together. Market liberalization obviously has an effect on employment, but these effects are not felt immediately. This creates two transitions occurring at two different times, which makes it more difficult for the government to carry out a coherent policy over time.

1.1.2. Issue-based Transition: Between Reality and Ideology

I will first point out the confusion found in the debate on transition in China, among Chinese actors themselves, and even sometimes among researchers. The first confusion is theoretical: the concept of transition is used extremely loosely, as an all-purpose theme, without thinking about the real definition and limits of the idea. In politics, transition is not truly defined either; sometimes it is a real program, but sometimes it is also used as an excuse, a pretext to explain problems and delays. I will also emphasize the ideological dimensions of transition, used as a means of justification.
What is the stable state toward which the Chinese transition is leaning? Transition is omnipresent in official speeches, the press and bibliographies, etc. It seems as though it is used as a consensual synonym for “revolution”, “change”, “progress”, “reform” or “modernization”, words which have strong connotations whereas transition is more neutral. In China, many people feel as if they have been swept up in permanent change, that they have totally lost their bearings, and they do not know toward which social model the government is heading. To what extent is the government managing transition? For certain authors, the central state is in control of everything and is truly master of the transition. For others, the government has largely lost control, especially in the provinces.

In one sense, all periods are transition, because history never stops. It is difficult to imagine a society without change, simply because this would presuppose stable balance, both internally and with the external world, which is simply impossible to imagine in a world where everything is intertwined. Only some primitive societies do not seem to evolve over a long period of time, but even this immobility is relative. Change is written in history. Note also that the idea that everything is constantly changing, and doing so with increasing rapidity, is one of the trademarks of modernity, as opposed to the “traditional” eras where history seemed to evolve slowly.

Because transition is linked to a certain vision of history and progress, this vision seems natural to us, whereas this is not necessarily so. Depending on the period and the civilization, history can be seen very differently: as immobile, as cyclical, or as a decline to be stopped.

In China, history was sometimes experienced as cyclical, for example in Buddhism. The succession of dynasties also encouraged a cyclical vision of history, possibly with crises that ended the cycles.

Descendant generations have a tendency to represent history as a decline, and transition periods are often perceived as an acceleration of this decline, particularly by the people.

Today in China, there is a contradiction between the official discourse that promotes belief in a bright tomorrow, and daily life, especially for older people who are nostalgic for the past, and feel with some confusion that history is a decline.

History as progress is a relatively recent vision, and it largely comes from European Renaissance ideas. In ancient China, there were already intellectuals who presented history as progress: sometimes Legalists, but also intellectuals from the Han dynasty who favored their own time over that of the ancients. In the West, the idea of history as progress was introduced in the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries, notably thanks to Hegel and Marx, who interpreted historical development in “scientific” terms. The XIXth century assimilates scientific progress with progress in general; progress becomes positive in this discourse, man becomes an actor of progress and of history, he is not happy simply to submit to it. These ideas bring about a legitimization of transition and progress in official vocabulary and ideology.

History has subjective dimensions. There is often conflict between transition and progress as they are conceived by governments and political actors, and the daily human experience of these changes. History is unavoidable in the Marxist discourse. Today in
China, all political speeches promote change and political measures by presenting them as moving in the same direction as progress and history, and have a tendency to stigmatize forces that go against change, for example some dissidents who denounce certain undesirable effects of change, and who are ostracized as reactionaries.

Toward which economic model is the government heading? The views within the Chinese government are not unanimous; some pressure groups propose contradictory models and objectives. The Chinese Communist Party wants to be united, but it is shaken up by various currents, or quarrels between factions. The principal faction tends toward a socialist market economy. One very small faction is more left-leaning and would like to revert to Marxist “fundamentals”. A third faction, sometimes called the New Left, would like to get closer to European models, notably with free unions. Finally, others, closer to the western center, encourage a much more liberalized, American-style system. Between these groups, the debates are extremely interesting, while the economic and social model promoted by official discourse remains extremely fuzzy. The official objective is to achieve a relatively egalitarian system, but in reality the divide between rich and poor, and between cities and rural areas, is becoming wider.

Concerning cultural transitions, I spoke just now about Chinese literature; will the present transition bring China closer to a more Chinese culture, or on the contrary, will it move further away from its traditional roots? Here again, some actors would like China to westernize and adopt western values such as human rights. Others, on the contrary, insist on the necessity of keeping traditional values like filial piety, or respect for superiors. This brings us to a related question, that of the western model: does the West still represent a model for China? Westerners often have a tendency to be fairly directive, an arrogant or paternalistic attitude which can be counter-productive. More fundamentally, some ask if the western model is best for Asian societies.

Official Chinese propaganda often represents transition, at least implicitly, as a change in the right direction. The modern era is also marked by the efficiency of ideology and of propaganda. The state can use the theme of transition in order to impose sacrifices and unpopular policies, and justify exceptional measures. And the Chinese government doesn’t hesitate to do so: numerous sacrifices are asked of the populations who are actors in the transition, but who can also be its victims. Transition is sometimes even presented by the Chinese government as a justification for inequalities, delays or even immobility. In some cases, observers have the impression of stagnation, or regression, notably in certain social practices such as the return of concubinage in southern China. It is difficult to see how the return of these “feudal” practices, in the Marxist sense of the word, can contribute to the implementation of a stable, post-transition system. We also see an opposition between on the one hand the singular ideology of transition, change, progress, and on the other all the little transitions and evolutions, multiple and diverse, which are sometimes very difficult to live with on a daily basis.

Up until the mid-1980s, health care coverage in China was very limited, but relatively universal. Today, this is no longer the case, and without money, many people cannot receive health care. Are we in the midst of a transition
toward a westernized social protection system? But for the victims of change, these phenomena of transition are extremely difficult to live with on a daily basis; these are themes found regularly in the literature. Currently in the major cities, many campaigns are being launched to invite the population to enroll in private insurance. It’s possible that in 20 or 30 years’ time, all Chinese will have good health insurance coverage, but today there is a disparity between the city and the countryside, between modernity and tradition. In addition, transition can follow different models: a European model (French or Nordic style with universal coverage), or an American model from before the Obama era, with the exclusion of a large minority of the population. But for the moment, let us note that the transition is negatively affecting many people in China.

Some Chinese, including some of those in power, recognize the necessity of “democratization” in the long run, but use the immensity of the country and its lack of democratic culture to justify the present situation. One related question is what nature the democratization process should take. Where to start? From the top, descending through all the hierarchical levels, or on the contrary a bottom-up process, starting from local democracy? Presently, there is voting in Chinese villages, but as we move up the echelons of power, we find nomination and promotion mechanisms that are much less transparent. At the same time, at the very top of the party, we have seen for several years that there have been more candidates than positions to fill, even if the choice remains modest: at the last National Assembly elections, there were 8% more candidates than positions to fill. Are we really in a transition phase? Is this transition being resisted, by a government that basically wants to keep the status quo? Is the system blocked? Official speeches are very ambiguous; on the one hand they appear to encourage democratization and on the other they point to problems linked to democracy in other Asian countries, such as in Taiwan, where the democratic debate sometime borders on fist-fights. Chinese authorities are happy to mock this style of democracy.

I will conclude with the non-linearity of transitions, a well-known problem which has been studied by change theorists. In developing systems or states we observe transitions that are not in line with each other: economic transition, then social transition, for example. According to a current model, economic modernization will firstly benefit a minority, then favor liberating values which will eventually lead to democratization, all at different rates of change.

Let’s take corruption as an example. Sociologists and economists sometimes distinguish between white corruption (considered normal in a given society), gray corruption (considered acceptable, and helpful to transition) and black corruption (considered unacceptable). This experience and these conceptions of corruption are changing significantly in China today. Procedures considered to be normal five or ten years ago are no longer acceptable today. Here again, we can see that there are some evolutions that are probably positive and which lead to a modernization of the system.

Is transition a reality, or is it rather a debate that hides changes that are much less accepted and controlled? Is there only one or are there many transitions? How long does a transition
last? Does the concept of transition facilitate forecasts, predictions? Paradoxically, the Chinese government makes many four-year plans, five-year plans, etc., following the logic of the planned economy which has been standard practice in China for decades, but hesitates to make forecasts and predictions concerning transition. Who are the principal actors of the transition? Is the government an actor of the transition or does it submit to it?

Although it is possible to speak relatively freely with the Chinese on most subjects, the weight of Marxist words and discourse is still heavy in their way of representing things. Behind the appearances of modernity hide ideological obstacles and a conventional vocabulary. In a way, the concept of transition is sufficient in and of itself, without any consideration or action plan. The Chinese government, especially at a local level, has only limited room for maneuver and often intervenes only to correct excesses, not as a true master of transition.

Thank you.

Exchanges...

Stéphane Lagrée

Thank you, Nicolas, for this intervention which gives us a framework, which varies between long and short timescales and reflects on themes as diverse as the employment market, literature, family, marriage. We will now open the floor to questions.

Jean-Pierre Cling, IRD-DIAL

I liked your presentation on the transition in China very much. Obviously, it is very difficult to compare a transition that occurred more than 2000 years ago with the present transition. For the first transition, you pointed out that it was not considered as such at the time, that instead it was considered to be a period of crisis, of political instability, of war. That being said, we still have the impression that this does not really apply to what is happening now. The current transition is affirmed, promoted, whereas 2000 years ago, it was not experienced as a shift from one state of being to another. Furthermore, the current transition is not really considered as a period of crisis. You spoke about the older generations and their nostalgia, but overall, it has been a period of extremely rapid economic progress. Social difficulties are apparent, but it is also a period of great economic stability and peace – except maybe in 1989 and the events of Tiananmen Square.

Second point. I’m a little surprised by your point of view which does not seem to take sides. Is this the historian’s wish to remain distant? Finally, you did not allow yourself to make any comparison with Việt Nam, but we could make numerous comparisons between what you have described and what we are now living through in this country.

Cristina Bellini, URDSE, Cambodia

You seem to say that the state does not really have control of this transition. With a government as centralized as China’s, what are the mechanisms that initiate such important social and cultural transitions? When a – sometimes violent – centralized transition is imposed, and then the source of authority potentially eases up, do we witness a regression? Who is active in transition, who starts it, who wants it, can we impose it?
Rodolphe De Koninck, Montreal University

I liked the wide range of your remarks very much. It seems to me that there is one thing you mentioned that merits deeper consideration. Could you discuss the reforms that began in 1978 in relation to the official launch of the modern Chinese agrarian transition, the appearance of new systems of responsibility in agriculture, accompanied in the years that followed by wide openings in economic, territorial and demographic terms?

Yves Perraudeau, Nantes University

You evoked the idea that the United States could swing in China’s direction. Is this a reference to Braudel’s theory, the shifts of the world economy; is it only a confrontation between these two countries, or more generally a swing from the world of the Atlantic to the world of the Pacific?

Nicolas Zufferey

To answer the first question concerning the comparison between the most ancient transition and the most recent, the differences are obvious. In comparing these two periods, I would like to emphasize the position of two types of actors: those who take it upon themselves to promote reforms and changes, and those who lag behind and are victims of these changes. Even if long-term reforms in ancient China were not experienced in the same manner as short-term contemporary reforms, there are still numerous convergences, especially the fact that in both cases contemporaries sense acceleration or even a crisis. Many people are very positive about what is happening in China today and rightly so, but in the rural areas, many problems are appearing and general discontent is gaining momentum. It doesn’t manifest itself in a spectacular way, but since 2006, there have been approximately 100,000 social protests officially recorded each year. We observe a dissatisfaction which is deep, but also paradoxical: most people recognize that their standard of living has improved, even in the countryside, but the disparities, the divides, and the inequalities have grown in an even more spectacular fashion. Since there are other new problems arising as well, this sentiment of crisis remains evident in rural areas. The same is true in urban areas, with migrant workers who represent tens of millions of people. It’s this sense of crisis, rather than real analogies, that I wanted to underline in the comparison of these two transitions separated by more than 2 millennia.

Concerning my personal point of view, first of all, very few China specialists would risk imagining what China will be like in 10, 15 or 20 years. We did that in the 2000s, when the Pekingologists predicted the splintering of China. Today, we see a certain political stability: the government is losing control of certain areas, but keeps its hold on politics, the police and army.

Concerning the government’s control over transition, it is clear that in the beginning, in 1978, a certain number of policies were decided upon, implemented and controlled. But in the 1990s, we really had the impression that the government was losing its influence, notably in the provinces which are sometimes managed pretty loosely. At one point, we found unofficial tollbooths on the roads, tollbooths which allowed local administrations to finance hospitals or schools because the central government was no longer financing them. Since the 2000s, control has been tightened, but the government sometimes
appears overwhelmed and has difficulty in dealing with many social problems. Hu Jintao, the Chinese president, insists that social divisions, which have worsened out of control, must be bridged. Deng Xiaoping himself affirms that part of the country should increase its wealth more rapidly, in order to pull the rest along in its wake. But “the rest” follow much too slowly, thus the dissatisfaction and even anger. Power can be affirmed with authority in many domains, notably the political domain. However, it is difficult for the state to stop certain practices: the return to patriarchy, important funerary rites, concubinage, etc.

Concerning the relations between China and the United States, the discourse is mostly very political and nationalistic in nature, and marked by a certain spirit of vengeance. The Chinese are very willing to see themselves as the superpower of the XXIst century. This nationalist temptation could become worrisome if Chinese growth peters out and social problems explode. The government could be tempted to find some exterior scapegoats. China could face other serious problems, notably ecological ones. Presently, we consider that 30% to 40% of the population has access to clean drinking water. Will China find itself in the position that it deems rightful, that is, globally pre-eminent? In the XVIIIth century, China produced one quarter of global production; the country is on the verge of reaching this level again and out-producing the United States by a factor of 2 to 1.

Francois Roubaud, IRD-DIAL

Thank you for this fascinating exposé treated with the hindsight of history. You have mentioned several times, as a positive point, the desire of the Party to draw on better trained elites. This vision is maybe not as simple as that. In Việt Nam, we see that lesser trained members of the elite have made good decisions in the past few years. If you take Latin America as an example, the success of the políticos demócratas did not have the expected effect, in particular on corruption.

What I find revealing in the debate between you and Jean-Pierre Cling is the contrast between a rather positive macro-economic vision and a more pessimistic sociological and anthropological vision, focused on conflicts. I think that in the case of China, we are more ready to accept the existence of a problem in that there is a real rise in inequality measured at the macro level. On the other hand, in Việt Nam, the inequalities have not increased as in China. The fact that you base your arguments on social protests does not seem to me to be truly significant: social protest does not only signify that a situation is deteriorating, but that the aspirations of the populations are rising. We see that in a period of real, severe crisis, and of economic decline, people are crushed by the situation and social movements have a tendency to diminish, and the unions shrink.

More broadly on the historical perspective, I am intrigued by the comparison between a transition that took place over four centuries and a transition taking place over only a few decades: do we have an acceleration of history, or is this the short-sightedness of the contemporary period? From your point of view as an historian, are there transitions which were not experienced as such in real time, and which were reconstructed ex post
as transitions? On the other hand, are there false transitions, which were experienced as such in real time by contemporaries, and which with historical hindsight were completely forgotten and are not considered as transitions today?

Virginie Diaz, AFD Paris

Since these conferences are dedicated to scientific output but also to the implementation of ideas, I would like to come back to the methodology that you adopted as an historian to support your remarks; notably to know more about how easy it was to gain access to the sources you use (archives, contemporary accounts, etc.).

Didier Orange, IRD

How to describe or recognize a transition? Each actor or person does not have the sense of living through a transition. Does a society have an initial state? At some moment, isn’t there a desire to define and to explain a transition? I would prefer to use the terms “movement” or “dynamic”, which are terms that we often use in physics; isn’t there a notion more religious than political in the concept of transition?

Bernard Formoso, West Paris University - Nanterre

I was wondering about how to put these two transitions into perspective and compare them. In the first transition which took place 2000 years ago, there is a transition in the sense that there is a shift from one political system to another, which was triggered by political and demographic factors. In the present case, does the notion of transition make sense? A political regime takes the initiative towards economic liberalization, but isn’t this a much wider phenomenon integrated in the global evolution of the world economy? So is it possible to end up with a stabilised version of the system; isn’t this an open process that will remain open? The same question can be asked of western countries. I think that it is possible there to have a transition of one political system to another, as during the first Chinese transition, but today, this concept of a third transition seems to me to be a rhetorical idea.

Lê Thế Vững, VASS

Two fundamental values in China are unity and discipline. Do you think that there is a link between the desire of the government to iron out ethnic diversity and the victims of this contemporary transition?

Nicolas Zufferey

I agree with most of François’s points on the elites, but I would like to add a nuance. Indeed, traditional elites in the Chinese Communist Party had a certain ideal, in which the people recognized themselves fairly well, even if corruption was rampant. In the 1980s, on the contrary, one had the feeling that the elites were also corrupt and that they neglected these values. Today, there is a reaffirmation of values such as social solidarity (sometimes a little rhetorical) in the discourse, and the appearance of officials who are competent in pure economics, finance, etc., even if the population sees them as highly educated technocrats who neglect the public interest.

Concerning potential transitions that were not experienced as such by the population, the second great Chinese transition that I just mentioned – the Song Period, sometimes
called the Chinese Renaissance – is revealing: during this period, large cities emerged and printing was developed, which facilitated the dissemination of culture. The actors of the time did not consider this to be a time of crisis or transition, partially because these changes were not integrated into an overarching debate on economic change. Nevertheless, historians consider this period as a major transition.

Concerning the methodology, in history, we try to combat the idea that there is only one modernity, that of the West. There are forms of pre-modernity and modernity in societies other than western societies, such as in Tokugawa-period Japan which implemented relatively open economic and educational systems. We speak more and more about “pre-modernity” for certain ancient eras, for example to describe the Song dynasty that I just spoke about.

In regards to sources, I mostly used dynastic histories, the writings of ancient thinkers, as well as some fictional texts (still rare at the time). For the contemporary era, popular literature, notably novels about social issues and novels by civil servants, are interesting to me: they reveal some reforms or evolutions in the provinces and villages from the inside. These writings have a sociological value, on the same level as interviews or field studies which are still difficult to carry out in China. Often, sociologists do not read Chinese and therefore cannot use these sources which are rich in material not found in the press, because of a stricter censorship: it seems important to me to decompartmentalize the disciplines and use “literary” material, for example, for sociological study.

How to recognize a transition? Is China going through transition today? The term is often over-used. On the social and economic level, everything is perpetually evolving; we live in open systems which are not very stable. Chinese authorities use the specific term transition abundantly in order to show and confirm their dynamic orientation, but this is not necessarily under control.

Christophe Gironde, Institut Universitaire d’Etudes du Développement (IHEID)

I have a question about the reference system, the point of departure. In China, what is the effectiveness, the reality of the reference system that we describe as socialist? My question is inspired by the Vietnamese case: we know today that the reference system – collectivization, cooperatives, production brigades, etc. – was not that robust. Today we talk about “cooperative on paper” or about “incomplete collectivization”. Finally, analyzing the reference situation allows us to understand the transition. In the case of agricultural transition, it was facilitated in that the collectivist system was greatly disturbed and corrupted by an economy that was not collectivist, which led to a pretty “easy” transition.

Martine Segalen, West Paris University - Nanterre

You have used terms such as transition, transformation, crisis or progress. When we consider how important gender equality and improved conditions for women are for Marxist ideologists – I am thinking for example of the first Soviet state laws –, doesn’t this economic modernization and relative political democratization represent
a regression for women’s conditions in contemporary society?

**Nicolas Zufferey**

China is still officially in search of a “Chinese Path of Socialism”. What are these words hiding? Western interpreters often see, in the notion of “Chinese Socialism”, a way of hiding state capitalism. Presently, the model contains many aspects which reveal unofficial capitalism and state capitalism, instead of socialism. Many debates are held on this extremely sensitive subject; some have even wanted to rename a Party that no longer seems very communist.

China is far behind the United States in terms of cultural influence, contrary to Japan or Korea which have a significant influence on the West – which we can see by the example of Japanese mangas. China is conscious of its unattractiveness which can result from the bad impression left by the Chinese government. The Confucius Institutes that are being set up now will certainly not help the situation, given that they are instruments of “soft power” intimately linked to the government.

The Chinese collectivization system was somewhat rigid and generalized. Movements such as the Cultural Revolution succeeded in effectively eradicating all private property. The Chinese communist party, unlike its Vietnamese counterpart, sometimes took the initiative of very violent movements against the “feudal” system. The resentment of a part of the population toward the party stems from these major movements. From this point of view, the reference system was well in place.

Concerning women, from 1949, there have been considerable advances: within a few years, Chinese women were granted many rights and had new access to professions that were previously reserved for men. Today, in certain regions, we are witnessing a regression, especially in rural areas. In general, less well educated communities will more readily experience a return to more patriarchal forms of family organization, which are less favorable to women.

**Reading (tamdaoconf.com)**

I am very happy to be here with you for the Summer School Week, but also happy to be in Việt Nam. This is perhaps my fortieth trip to this country in eighteen years! It changes very quickly, but the transformations actually come about at the same speed as in the rest of Southeast Asia.

My objective is to concentrate on one type of transformation: the agrarian transition, in particular the one taking place throughout Southeast Asia. My presentation is made of three major parts. First, I will make some remarks on the agrarian transition, referring to its accepted definitions and its main elements. I will then describe the characteristics of the Southeast Asian agrarian transition, in particular over the last fifty years. Finally, I will present a research project, for which I have been responsible for nearly six years, which touches on the agrarian transition in Southeast Asia and involves researchers from some twenty universities worldwide, including some eighty PhD students.

1.2.1. What is the Agrarian Transition?

To a large extent, the history of agriculture can be perceived as a reflection of the history of humanity. Since its origins, agriculture has been in constant change in response to multiple human requirements. It has gone through many adaptations concerning the use of seeds, cuttings, fertilizer or irrigation; it has thus been and remains a constant source of innovation and invention. Frequently, the search for solutions to agricultural problems has led to fundamental scientific discoveries. So there is a very close link between invention, innovation and the solving of agricultural problems and challenges. In addition, agriculture has unceasingly been the object of intensification, but also territorial expansion. Consequently, it is possible to conceive of the history of agriculture as that of its expansion.

I will come back to this question since one of the unique features of Southeast Asia’s agrarian transition is that it is accompanied by a permanent expansion of agriculture, which is exceptional in the contemporary context, except for the case of Brazil. The idea of agrarian transition, of change, is still vague,
even if we define it today as the shift from a society characterized by accumulation in agriculture to a society in which accumulation occurs in industry. In the literature, particularly Marxist literature, the industrial revolution is interpreted as resulting from an agrarian transition. Often, terms such as “industrial revolution”, “industrial transition”, “urban transition”, are used to define a phenomenon initiated in the European countryside, which can sometimes lead to confusion. In Marxist ideology, the agrarian transition is defined as a transformation of production relations between those who own land and those who work it. The fundamental idea is to identify where the major form of accumulation in an economy occurs: fields or factories, countryside or city?

It is above all Marx who defined the agrarian transition, and therefore the industrial revolution which first took place in the English countryside. The transition was from a feudal society in which accumulation was based on the appropriation of surplus agricultural production – a visible appropriation by the land owners or landlords, to a capitalist society where the accumulation of an invisible added-value took place within industry. This transition brought about fundamental upheavals in the countryside and the cities, taking on different forms depending on the country. However, fundamentally, the processes were comparable: primary accumulation was no longer based on agriculture but on industry, this evolution having been not linear, but occurring through upheavals, resistance, progress and regression.

What are the phenomena that have generated these changes, this shift from so-called feudal societies to capitalist societies, from agrarian societies to urban and industrial societies? Is the agrarian transition which is associated with the industrial revolution the result of technical innovations – invention of the wheel, improvement of weaving looms in English industry, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), or the result of social disruptions – appearance of the middle class, enclosure of common pastures which allowed the lords to seize an even greater agricultural surplus, which facilitated industrialization? I am simplifying, of course, but we can summarize this with two predominant hypotheses: the technical and technological hypothesis and the social hypothesis, from Marxist-inspired political economy. Is the shift from agricultural accumulation to industrial accumulation explained by the transformation of social relationships or by the “green revolution”? Throughout the process of agrarian transformation, is agriculture in and of itself an object of industrialization? One thing is certain: the conditions for improving production are defined more and more by industry found both upstream and downstream of agricultural production. The means of production are increasingly defined, perfected, produced and above all given financial backing by industry. Fertilizer, machinery, pesticides and insecticides are provided upstream; distribution, packaging, delivery are provided downstream; both create an unceasing and growing demand for fossil fuels. These processes are very visibly accelerating on a global scale. In highly advanced agriculture – for example American and European –, the conditions for agricultural production are defined more and more by the means of industrial production, while globalization is increasingly a driving force affecting agriculture.
The agrarian transition has taken many forms in different parts of the world. It is a process which began with the history of humanity and which will end with it. However, there is a moment in the history of a society, and I am coming back to the Marxist vision, where accumulation is increasingly organized within industry at the expense or even to the detriment of agriculture. How can this conceptual device be useful to us in deciphering what is happening in Southeast Asia?

1.2.2. The Agrarian Transition in Southeast Asia

Starting in the 1950s, most of the region’s modern nations were put into place, and fundamental changes were orchestrated by more or less authoritarian decisions. We must remember that after World War II, Southeast Asian agriculture was in a pitiful state, although the colonial administrations promoted some forms of investment in agriculture, essentially for export, especially of rubber and rice. During the post-war years, the political situation in the region became more and more problematic: a serious crisis in Indonesia forcing the central government to deal with movements for political autonomy in peripheral islands, social or ethnic tensions in the Philippines and Malaysia, wars in Indochina, the exodus of Indian minorities from Burma, which contributed to the destabilization of its economy, etc. The leaders of various governments then had to make decisions, particularly regarding the rural and agricultural realm, the nexus of the main tensions: should they move forward with technical reforms or social reforms, promote agrarian reforms instead of “green revolutions”? How should they stop peasant revolutions (Philippines, Java, Indochina) in the countryside, which was poorly controlled by the authorities? The governments therefore put in place interventionist policies in agriculture, taking measures to promote a peaceful agrarian transition and, gradually, to generate a surplus while reducing poverty in the countryside and accelerating the integration of their national economies into the global market.

Instead of finding politically difficult solutions to apply to the problems of land ownership and tenure, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines chose to launch a green revolution, whilst establishing technical means for improving production. This depended on output growth, primarily in food production, where growth was based firstly on the use of high-yielding rice varieties, and secondly on the increased use of industrial fertilizer, pesticides and insecticides, all in an effort to increase the twice-yearly harvest of rice, by far the primary staple food crop in the region. However such intensification could not happen without an improvement in irrigation and drainage, the responsibility for which would be increasingly taken over by the state. Because, everywhere in Southeast Asia, irrigation is always necessary for a double harvest.

Despite the existence of ancient village and even State irrigation systems – especially during the golden age of the Angkor Kingdom – no Southeast Asian society had the hydraulic infrastructure necessary to irrigate and drain rice fields sustainably twice a year. This form of intensification, applied more recently in certain countries, such as Vietnam, would create closer ties with the industrial sector, the designated supplier of inputs that had become indispensable.
In this manner, many rural areas were gradually transformed into permanent rice production platforms instead of seasonal ones.

We sometimes forget that intensification has also been increasingly applied to cash crops. Beginning in the 1970s, the output of rubber trees, then, notably, that of coffee bushes and palm oil trees grew rapidly. These increases in output among commercial crops also represent a component of the green revolution. We must keep in mind that this term, apparently apolitical, has in fact highly political connotations. High yielding variety seeds were created in order to provide a technical response to problems of poverty in the countryside – problems officially considered as primarily due to weak crop production – providing a means to counter the red revolution.

Accompanied by vigorous expansion of farmland, crop intensification policies helped avoid having to modify agrarian structures almost everywhere. In fact, although Southeast Asia industrialized and urbanized at least as quickly, if not more so, than the rest of the developing world, agriculture has continued to intensify and expand, leading to exceptional growth in production. However, during the 1930s and 1940s, the capacity of Southeast Asia to feed itself was questioned by eminent geographers, such as Pierre Gourou, René Dumont and Charles Robequain. This debate was taken up by many authors and governments up until at least the mid-1960s. After that, the region’s farmers proved that they were capable of increasing not only food but also commercial crops more rapidly than the region’s population itself was increasing.

For geopolitical reasons, as well as strictly agrarian reasons, agricultural intensification and territorial expansion were actively pursued, except in Thailand. This characteristic is fundamental. In Europe as in East Asia, farmland has been decreasing considerably since the 1960s in the case of China. There, of course, crop cultivation has been intensified, but for multiple reasons linked to urban and industrial expansion as well as environmental problems and land deterioration, its extent is decreasing. Agricultural land is decreasing also in India and on the African continent, with few exceptions. As I have pointed out in many of my publications, the region’s peasants have very often been used as a “territorial spearhead of the state.” For several reasons, notably for the State to better control them, frontier territories have been conquered through agricultural land pioneering, such as the case in the Philippines at the beginning of the XXth, in Indonesia, especially since the 1950s, in Malaysia since its independence and in Việt Nam over the last thirty-five years. This reliance on agriculture as a tool of territorial conquest and for the resolution of territorial management problems has been used in many regions of the world and is often mentioned in historical literature. It is nevertheless exceptionally common in Southeast Asia. The conquest of frontier territory is also used as a tool for diluting the presence of ethnic minorities, as the redistribution of population as a geopolitical tool remains very common today.

It is initially within agriculture and through agriculture that many countries, especially Indonesia and Việt Nam, have succeeded in reducing the problem of poverty, by applying highly interventionist agricultural policies. However, for at least the last decade, agricultural expansion has been increasingly driven by private enterprises, large
plantations especially, in a context where terrestrial ecosystems, notably forest ones, and now increasingly marine ecosystems, have deteriorated and regressed rapidly. Throughout Southeast Asia, agricultural production is growing very rapidly, as is aquaculture production – land or marine based – as ocean fishing can no longer meet demand. The pressure for productivity is increasingly spreading to all land and marine based territories.

Figure 1  Global Demographic Growth and Agricultural Expansion, 1700-2007

Remember that one characteristic of this region is that expansion of agricultural territory has very closely followed intensification of agriculture, to such an extent that it is expanding faster than the population is increasing, contrary to what has happened elsewhere, especially in Africa.
If we compare agricultural expansion throughout the world, we see that it has slowed down or even been reversed, except in Asia. In Europe agriculture is losing ground.
In Southeast Asia, agricultural expansion is more rapid than demographic growth.

**Figure 4** Proportion of Land Allocated to Agriculture by Country, 1961-2007

In the region, Thailand is the only country where agricultural territory has stopped expanding. In Cambodia, the break corresponds to the reign of the Khmer Rouge. In Việt Nam, agricultural expansion was launched on a massive scale after 1975.

In the Philippines, one of the region’s two most densely populated countries along with Việt Nam, agriculture is spreading, as in Malaysia which represents the most industrialized nation in the region – except for Singapore.

**Figure 5** Rice Yields by Country, 1961-2007

Growth of agriculture depends also on yield increases: rice yields, still very low 20-25 years ago, have practically caught up with those of East Asian countries such as Japan, Korea and Taiwan.

Intensification/expansion of agriculture was first applied to food crops – first rice, but also corn, tapioca, etc. –, then to cash crops such as rubber, palm oil and coffee.

Over the last decade, expansion of commercial crops has been more rapid than that of food crops. Southeast Asian agricultural production, including that of rice, is increasingly turning toward the global market, with Thailand and Việt Nam the world’s leading rice exporters.

**Figure 6** Southeast Asia. Cash Crops (Rubber, Palm Oil, Coffee) versus Food Crops (Rice and Corn), 1961-2007

**Figure 7a** Fisheries, 1950-2006

Regarding aquaculture and fisheries, production is increasing even more rapidly than population. Aquaculture is increasing more rapidly than the entire sector.

The consumption of fish is vital in some Southeast Asian countries. Việt Nam has the highest *per capita* consumption, and it is also very important in the Indonesian island of Java, as in Japan. This market is increasingly fed by aquaculture which is oriented toward the export market. The vast majority of shrimp produced in Southeast Asia are destined for the Chinese and Japanese markets.
This table illustrates the importance of Southeast Asian exports and their omnipresence on the global market. Thailand is the second agro-exporter among so-called Southern countries, after Brazil. Once again, let’s point out that many of these crops are not food crops. For example, among the factors behind the growth in the production of palm oil are its uses in the cosmetics industry and its potential for use in agro-fuels, such as biodiesel.
The agrarian transition is not only driven by the countryside; it has also arisen from the increasing demographic weight of cities. The graphs clearly show that urban population is growing much more rapidly than rural population.

1.2.3. The CHATSEA Project

Agrarian transition involves an increasingly obvious transfer toward the urban sector, whose relative size is growing rapidly: in the number of people, in production – as industry is booming – and above all in employment. In Malaysia, an important agro-exporter, less than 10% of the population is employed in agriculture. This is not surprising when we compare this situation with that in the United States or France – between one and four per cent of the population working in agriculture. However, Southeast Asian countries are still at the agrarian transition stage, and the hold of industry over the entire agricultural sector is still far from complete. But already, while governments proliferate regulations, multinationals choose the goods that they want to sell on the market, and increasingly impose all the conditions for their production.
The shift from a society in which the relationships of production, accumulation and employment and the residential areas are predominantly rural, towards a society in which all these components become increasingly urban and industrial, is the object of a major research project that I am directing. The project is entitled CHATSEA, which stands for Challenges of the Agrarian Transition in Southeast Asia. The project began in 2005 and is scheduled to finish officially at the end of 2010, and it is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. When it was devised in 2004, our objective was to attempt to analyze and interpret the characteristics, risks and challenges of the agrarian transition as it was proceeding throughout Southeast Asia. The team of researchers already assembled launched a series of studies on what we have collectively identified as the six fundamental processes of the agrarian transition: 1) agricultural intensification and territorial expansion, 2) urbanization and industrialization, 3) growing integration of production in the market economy, 4) intensification of regulations, 5) increase in population mobility, 6) environmental changes.

Our team, principally made up of researchers and students preparing a doctorate or a Master’s and coming from some ten countries, including six in Southeast Asia, has chosen to analyze these processes, either specifically or in combination, through four “windows” of observation: 1) globalization, 2) conditions and means of subsistence, 3) territoriality, 4) institutions and actors. We will say more on this subject during our workshop in Tam Đảo, which will look at the agrarian transition and its great complexity in Southeast Asia.

Thank you.

Exchanges...

Stéphane Lagrée

Thank you, Rodolphe, for this presentation. The participants in this workshop are in good hands, being exposed to conclusions reached after nearly six years of such large-scale research! Now let’s take questions.

Bernard Formoso, West Paris University - Nanterre

You have described the agrarian transition in Southeast Asia as a combination of agricultural expansion and intensification processes. In my mind, Thailand is a borderline case, and is first to face the problems that other countries of the region will be experiencing in the coming decades. In fact, this process of territorial expansion, which depends on an extension of agriculture on virgin land, has its limits. In Thailand, for political and ecological reasons, it is no longer possible to pioneer land. Agricultural intensification doesn’t follow; there is a problem of transition between expansion and agricultural intensification. This results in social problems, of which we are seeing the measure now with the political crisis in Thailand in May 2010. How do you see the evolution over time of the transition process?

Rodolphe De Koninck

Indeed, the case of Thailand is interesting because it is different: the country was not colonized, did not have an official green revolution, for a long time rice yields remained lower than in most other Southeast Asian countries, its cultural homogeneity is pretty rare for the region. I share your point of view here, but I would point out some unique
features in relation to other countries in the region that show the contradictions and risks of agrarian transition. Although Thailand depends on a largely extroverted economy, and the industrial sector is expanding, the proportion of the population involved in agriculture remains very high in relation to Malaysia, Indonesia or the Philippines. The case of Thailand is extreme: the agrarian transition is proceeding vigorously, Bangkok is an exceptional example of urban monocephaly, the urban middle class is correspondingly large, agricultural expansion has ceased, farmland has begun to retract – especially in the northern plains. In brief, the case of Thailand is an example of what can make an agrarian transition difficult to control.

Martine Segalen, West Paris University - Nanterre

Are you not being a bit hegemonic by describing all these transformations under the title of agrarian transition? You start with ancient forms of agriculture and you end up with a global system. I am very surprised at the small part that industrialization and urbanization play in your presentation. I would also make a reference to Henri Mendras and his book “La fin des paysans” (The End of Peasants) or the transformation of peasants into industrial workers in the food-processing industry. What do you think?

Concerning the theories elaborated in your project, CHATSEA, do students analyze the impact of public policies on local case studies?

Christophe Gironde, Institut Universitaire d’Etudes du Développement (IHEID)

You hardly mentioned non-agricultural activities, whereas they represent an increasingly fundamental part both of working hours and of revenue. Isn’t pluri-activity a major characteristic of this peasantry in transition?

Yves Perraudoueau, Nantes University

I spent ten years in the Advisory Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture in Brussels as an economist. I would just like to confirm your statements and add some details. Global fishing today accounts for almost 90-95 million tons, and has done so pretty consistently since the 1980s. Asia accounts for a large part, around 60% of this production, and nine of its countries are among the fifteen top producing countries. This position is still more hegemonic in aquaculture: since the 1980s, it has gone from five million tons to 60 million tons which effectively shows that the growth of sea products results from aquaculture, equally divided between marine aquaculture and continental aquaculture. Asia occupies a quasi-monopolistic position with 90% of the global aquaculture production, especially China which produces 40 million tons. However, I am more doubtful about your position on the effective control of fishing activity in the world, especially in the Pacific Ocean.

I have another remark: as regards this sharing of added-value which is obviously very important, and the role of the other actors relative to this added-value, you have not mentioned the Physiocrats and François Quesnay concerning sharing between distributors and farmers.

François Roubaud, IRD – DIAL

You have mentioned expansion and intensification linked to the agrarian transition, but what about informalization?
The idea of constructing industrialization and urbanization on the model of developed societies is not what we observe here in Việt Nam or in the Philippines. Isn't industrialization and urbanization in Southeast Asia linked to informalization instead?

Rodolphe De Koninck

During this summary presentation, out of the six fundamental processes we had singled out, I indeed favored two, agricultural intensification and territorial expansion. This does not mean that I underestimate industrialization, urbanization or pluri-activity, which we could discuss at length and which we study very thoroughly in the CHATSEA project.

Concerning fishing and its control, I would just like to point out that the situation has greatly evolved since the time of Korean, Japanese and Taiwanese fishing boats systematically pillaging the aquatic resources of the territorial waters of Southeast Asia. Today, intrusions by foreign fleets are less frequent.

I also find the Physiocrats interesting, but I have favored a Marxist approach for this presentation.

Jean-Pierre Cling, IRD-DIAL

You have presented the increase in agricultural area and output as a very important component in agrarian transition, by drawing a distinction between the green revolution and agrarian reform in favor of the green revolution in most of the countries influenced by the United States. However, I would say that in Việt Nam there has been an agrarian reform and a green revolution at the same time, which creates a few problems. For example, the agrarian reform may have slowed down agricultural production through the decrease in land cultivated.

I would like to take this opportunity to make a comment on fishing and aquaculture: it is fascinating to see in Việt Nam that there has been an expansion toward the continental frontiers in the west and toward the marine frontiers in the east at the same time.

Rodolphe De Koninck

Thank you for reminding us of these characteristics of the Vietnamese agrarian reform, which can also be partially found in Laos or in Cambodia during the reign of the Khmer Rouge. In addition, in Indonesia, there have been attempts at agrarian reform, essentially in Java. As you point out, these reforms have slowed down the green revolution, except in the very special case of the Philippines, where a capitalist agrarian reform has taken place and hasn't yet finished... But today, governments including those in Indochina are turning towards a market economy solution by favoring the privatization of agriculture and increases in yield.
1.3. Transitions in the Labor Market: Macro and Micro Readings


(Re-transcription)

1.3.1. Context and Objectives

Mireille Razafindrakoto

First of all, I want to tell you how happy I am to participate for the fourth time in this Summer School. Thanks to Stéphane and to Trang, to the Academy of Social Sciences for having invited us again this year.

This morning we will discuss the concept of transition in an economic perspective and present two complementary approaches: one is based on the macro perspective of the DIAL team in partnership with the General Statistics Office of Việt Nam (GSO); this team is made up of François Roubaud, Jean-Pierre Cling, Nguyễn Hữu Chí and myself. The other is the micro perspective of the socio-economist, Christophe Gironde. This “double entry” study allows us to establish a parallel between our approaches and methods. We will see if it is possible to establish dialogue, to bring out synergies, to perceive divergence and convergence of our respective analyses. This session will also form an introduction to the workshop “How is Economic Transition Experienced and Perceived by the Population? Analysis of the Complementarity Between Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches”, which will benefit greatly from the presence of the socio-anthropologist, Christian Culas.

This presentation will address economic transition – especially the movement from a planned economy to a liberalised economy, urbanization linked to urban transition (migration from the country to the cities) and their consequences for the labor market (shift from agricultural to non-agricultural activities). The economic transition in Việt Nam is characterized by strong economic growth and a certain reduction of poverty. Nevertheless, parallel to that, we see a rise in inequality, not only between rural and urban areas, but also within these zones themselves. What does the development of these inequalities mean in terms of the integration of the different sections of the population into the labor market? Our objective is to understand the trends in progress and to measure their evolution.
The main initial aspects for analysis were the following:

- impact of economic growth and of urbanization in terms of restructuring and diversification of revenue sources;
- specific dynamics of different types of environments - urban, rural etc.;
- influence of the proximity of major urban centers;
- role and place of the informal sector;
- characteristics of the informal sector, in terms of working conditions and its links to the rest of the economy.

To address these themes, two methodological approaches were adopted. First, we took a macro approach to studying the evolution over time of four types of environments:

- urban communes of two large cities, Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City;
- peri-urban zones around Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City;
- urban communes other than Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City;
- rural communes.

Christophe Gironde will then present a study undertaken in two districts of the province of Hưng Yên, rural districts which nevertheless have similarities with peri-urban areas. This time, the focus is more micro-level and socio-economic.

These distinctions between areas bring up questions, especially about the relevance of the definition of urban and rural in Việt Nam. We have, nevertheless, chosen to adopt the administrative (official) definition for urban and rural communes. This definition is open to question, and sometimes may not correspond to field realities. But our plan was to use this definition to analyze the observable phenomena in each zone, and their specific characteristics in terms of the dynamics of the labor market. Three criteria are used to define an urban commune:

- over 65% of the active population employed outside agriculture;
- total population of over 4,000;
- demographic density of over 2,000 inhabitants/km².

Using the study led at the national level and the micro study in the Khoái Châu and Văn Giang districts, we will present several snapshots, on different scales, according to different analyses, and we will show you their complementarity. We need to set local situations in a wider context in order to analyze the dynamics at the national level and the opportunities that the population has when it migrates. Similarly, when working with observations at the macro or global scale, it is useful to have a more precise view so as to shed light on regional mechanisms, the specific characteristics of provinces, the internal logic of communes, households, etc.

I will first present the principal significant facts that characterize the current restructuring of the labor market – in particular the size of the informal sector. This macro reading will be followed by an intermediary interpretation, with a comparison of the characteristics of the informal sector in urban and peri-urban areas. We will look at the different types of activity in the informal sector; working conditions, integration with the formal economy and prospects for evolution. Christophe will then set out a micro-level interpretation, addressing the agrarian transition and the development of non-agricultural activities. We did not necessarily ask ourselves the same questions initially,
but in the end we have many themes and issues in common. Our colleague has taken the agrarian transition as his starting point, while we have chosen the phenomenon of urbanization. Ultimately, we discover the importance of informal micro-units within the economy.

1.3.2. Urbanization and Recent Dynamics in the Labor Market

**Principal Determining Facts affecting the Labor Market 1998-2006**

Four significant facts should be recognized:

- employment in the agricultural sector is diminishing;
- this favors the growth of the private non-agricultural sector;
- individual non-agricultural enterprises are playing a greater part in the labor market;
- salaried employment is growing.

![Figure 11 Evolution of Employment by Sector in Viêt Nam](image)

**IE**: Individual Enterprises.

Restructuring of the Labor Market

We will concentrate particularly on these groups: individual enterprises and salaried employees in these enterprises, as well as informal self-employment and formal self-employment.

Our first observation is the decrease in agricultural employment and the stability of the public sector. There is a gradual increase in the non-agricultural private sector, which includes all private and individual enterprises. In terms of self-employment, we do not see any particular trend on a national scale. However, a clear rise in the rate of salaried employment in individual enterprises and therefore, a rise in the number of small business employees, is perceptible. The domestic private sector (with national capital) is growing as well.

What exactly is happening in the urban communes of Hồ Chí Minh City and Hà Nội?:

- agriculture represents an almost negligible share of employment;
- public sector employment is stagnating;
- foreign companies have a tendency to increase in importance;
- domestic private enterprises are growing strongly and the share of each of the three groups of enterprises remains stable.

**Figure 12** Evolution of proportion of employment, by sector

- **Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City**
- **Other Urban Centers**

IE: Individual Enterprises.

![Diagram showing evolution of proportion of employment by sector for Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City, Other Urban Centers.](image-url)
For other urban zones, excluding Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City:

- the proportion of employment in agriculture remains important;
- the proportion of employment in the public sector is not really evolving;
- the proportion of employment in foreign and domestic private companies is rising less markedly than in the two metropolises;

- the proportion of employment in individual enterprises (self-employment or wage labor) is stagnating.

Thus, the proportion of informal self-employment is considerable – around 20%. If we add all those who work in these non-agricultural production micro-units, the proportion is 50%, as it is in Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City.

Figure 13 Evolution of proportion of employment, by sector

IE: Individual Enterprises.
In rural environments, apart from the usual stability of the public sector, we note:

- a decrease in agricultural employment;
- a significant increase in people who work in domestic private enterprises;
- above all, a sharp rise in salaried employment in individual companies.

In the peri-urban zones there is a particularly pronounced dynamic, with rapid transformation in the agricultural sector, and a rise in the number of foreign and domestic private enterprises. The individual micro-units are increasing as well, from 25% in 1998 to nearly 50% in 2006.

Are peri-urban zones undergoing a transformation from rural to urban? Will the structure of the labor market in Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City remain stable or will it continue to evolve?

At the political and economic level, when we mention industrialization little importance is given to small individual units – which are for the most part informal – even though they represent around 30-40% of the labor market in Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 Rate of Pluri-activity; Economically Active People Combining Agricultural Work with Another Type of Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban HN HCMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural HN HCMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* HN: Hà Nội; HCMC: Hồ Chí Minh City.
Does the shift of people from the agricultural sector to the non-agricultural sector result in multi-activity, by which I mean the pursuit of agricultural activities accompanied by the development of non-agricultural activities? The analysis often shows a total abandonment of agricultural activities. Indeed, in peri-urban zones, the number of economically active people who combine agricultural and non-agricultural activities decreases sharply over a short period of time (from 1998-2006) – from 33% to 19%.

Size of the Informal Sector

The development of informal employment is particularly important between 1998 and 2006, whether in terms of the number of companies (55% growth) or the number of jobs (73% growth). Informalization accompanies urbanization. These calculations were based on the “Việt Nam Household Living Standard Survey,” which was not primarily intended to quantify the informal sector.

In 2007 and 2009 we carried out a specific study to measure the informal sector – comprising all activities that are non-agricultural and non-registered – which confirmed its major significance in all zones: in Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City, other cities, rural areas, but above all in the peri-urban zone (up to 37% of employment). On the national level, the informal sector constitutes the primary source of non-agricultural employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nº of enterprises and jobs in the informal sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nº of enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Hanoi HCMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural HN HCMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

явление густых городов и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханоя и Ханoya and above all in peri-urban zones

1.3.3. Comparison of Characteristics of Urban and Peri-urban Area Informal Sectors. The Case of Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City

What are the characteristics of the informal sector in urban and peri-urban zones? Are there significant differences between the big cities of Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City and the peri-urban zones?

Type of Activities, Working Conditions and Performance

We note that informal activities are generally made up of services and commercial activities, especially in the urban areas. We also note a differentiation between urban and peri-urban zones: in urban areas, services are more prevalent; in peri-urban zones, commercial and manufacturing work is predominant.

Why are we so interested in the informal sector? Not only because of its size, but also because this informalization can be problematic, in terms of integration, inequality, instability and working conditions. It involves micro-units, where self-employment is the rule – 73% of production units include only one person. Most jobs are not contractual, and there is a general absence of social protection. Earnings are for the most part very low despite a certain heterogeneity. Informal sector earnings are clearly inferior in peri-urban areas.

### Table 4

*Employment by Sector in Việt Nam*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Sector</th>
<th>Urban Hanoi</th>
<th>Other Urban</th>
<th>Rural HCMC</th>
<th>Other Rural</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Enterprise</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Private Enterprise</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Individual Enterprise</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Sector</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Informal Sector (IS): Primary source of non-agricultural employment
- 23% of total employment
- 50% of non-agricultural employment

Source: LFS2007, GSO; our own calculations.
Table 5  Type of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector of Activity</th>
<th>Urban Zone</th>
<th>Peri-urban Zone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N°. IPUs</td>
<td>N°. Jobs%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanoi</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCMV</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⇒ Predominant Services in Urban Zone  
(small restaurants, repair and transportation services)  
⇒ Industry in Peri-urban Zone  
(transformation activities for common consumption goods)

Source: Study of households and informal sector enterprises (HB&ISS), Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City (2008), GSO-ISS / IRD-DIAL. IPU – Informal Production Unit.

Table 6  Principal Outlets: household consumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Activities</th>
<th>Public or par-public</th>
<th>Formal Enterprises</th>
<th>Individual Enterprises</th>
<th>Auto-consumption</th>
<th>Public or par-public</th>
<th>Formal Enterprises</th>
<th>Individual Enterprises</th>
<th>Auto-consumption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hanoi</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hồ Chí Minh City</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>58.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only the industrial IE sell a part of their production to large formal enterprises

Source: Study of households and informal sector enterprises (HB&ISS), Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City (2008), GSO-ISS / IRD-DIAL.
I have already pointed out the importance of the manufacturing sector in peri-urban areas. Can the informal sector keep up with national economic growth? Is it integrated with this economy, or does it remain at the margins of the current growth dynamic? When we analyze the sales outlets of these informal production units, we see that these units address household consumption and not that of large companies. Here again, we should distinguish between urban and peri-urban areas: in the latter, a large part of production is for other individual companies. Also, it is generally manufacturing activity that is integrated with other companies.

### Subcontracting and Custom Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Activities</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th></th>
<th>Peri-urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-contracting</td>
<td>Custom</td>
<td>Sub-contracting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hà Nội</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hồ Chí Minh City</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⇒ Sub-contracting is marginal (only exception is industrial activity in Hà Nội: 8%)
⇒ Custom work: much more, especially in the industrial sector in the peri-urban zone.

Source: Study of households and informal sector enterprises (HB&ISS), Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City (2008), GSO-ISS / IRD-DIAL.

### Integration of Activities with the Rest of the Economy

There is a well-known dynamic in the peri-urban areas, with craft villages where there is a chain of activities and production that involves small enterprises supplying other small enterprises, who then in turn supply other small enterprises. Ultimately, the last link in the chain can send its product to large companies, sometimes for export. Here, the size of the informal sector, its integration with the rest of the economy and its use of sub-contracting are at their most meaningful. Contrary to preconceptions concerning informal sector integration in the Asian economy, i.e. that it profits from formal sector growth through sub-contracting, this mechanism actually remains extremely limited, especially in Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City.
It is also common to hear that migrants constitute the majority of those in informal employment, such as street merchants. According to the figures, this interpretation is erroneous: informal employment is mainly composed of non-migrants, people who live locally.

### Perspectives of the Informal Sector

Finally, what do people employed in the informal sector experience and feel about integration? We have conducted a few qualitative interviews. Thus, the questions “would you like your children to take over your activity?” and “do you think your activity has a future?” received a majority of negative answers, which illustrates the precariousness of the sector, although pessimism is less prevalent in the peri-urban areas. The informal sector is envied by the peasantry, but is not perceived as an acceptable aspiration for the majority of those who wish to join the formal sector of the economy, by occupying salaried positions with the government or with large companies, considered as a sign of modernity.

### Proportion of Migrants Employed in the Informal Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Residential registration</th>
<th></th>
<th>Residential registration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hà Nội</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Industry</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Commerce</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Services</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCMC</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Industry</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Commerce</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Services</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Study of households and informal sector enterprises (HB&ISS), Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City (2008), GSO-ISS / IRD-DIAL.
1.3.4. Agrarian Transition and Integration in the Labor Market

[Christophe Gironde]

Before presenting the transformation in integration with labor markets for the inhabitants of Tân Dân, I would like to make a few remarks on the categorization of zones and populations. First, rural migrants, who are a component of the economic and urban transition which was just presented – in China called a “floating population” – are not always counted when in the city. These populations are categorized as rural, in reference to their communities of origin (birth or home after marriage) although they spend part of their time in urban and peri-urban areas. Still, we should note that commune administrations now distinguish a category of “people registered in the commune, but who do not live there”. It would be useful to create new categories, corresponding to changes in systems of activities of the population. Secondly, the criteria of categorization could justifiably be reconsidered: in fact, we can classify the Tân Dân community in the “urban” category because of its population – 13,447 inhabitants – and the importance of its non-agricultural activities, because 66% of households are involved in these. Given the accessibility of Hà Nội, Tân Dân could be qualified as peri-urban. However, if we look at the evolution of employment, the case of Tân Dân is more similar to the rural communities analyzed by Mireille Razafindrakoto.

The community of Tân Dân is situated in the Khoái Châu district in the Hưng Yên province, 40 km southeast of Hà Nội or 40 minutes away by motorized vehicle. The community is well

![Table 9 Perspectives of the Informal Sector](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Sector</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Peri-urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PU head considering future exists for activity (%)</td>
<td>PU head wanting children to continue activity (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hà Nội</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal (IPU)</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCMV</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⇒ The heads of IPU are systematically more optimistic in peri-urban zones than in urban zones concerning their future

Source: Study of households and informal sector enterprises (HB&ISS), Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City (2008); GSO-ISS / IRD-DIAL.
linked to the capital and other cities of the delta by a dense network of roads practicable all year long. Also, the seven villages in the community have been linked to each other since the 1990s by cemented roads.

My research consisted for the most part in semi-structured interviews with households, focusing on changes to their systems of productive activity, aiming to find out about (1) access to productive resources, (2) planting and livestock raising systems, non-agricultural activities and activities outside of the village, (3) the productive and economic output of the households. This study addresses the period from the mid-1980s to today. The starting point, the years 1985-87, corresponds to the time when all households were given land and taken out of the production brigades and the cooperative system. Most of the research was carried out between 1996 and 1998, then in 2009. At that time, I asked the same questions of a panel of households which I had interviewed 12 years before. Apart from the question “what do you do today?” I studied the productive activities of their children in order to see if the Red River Delta population is reproducing itself as a peasantry.

### 2009 Sample - Demographic Benchmarks

- 83 households interviewed – 153 adults registered (>18 yrs)
- Average age of household head: 40 yrs – Average age: 35 yrs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 55 yrs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55 yrs</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45 yrs</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35 yrs</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25 yrs</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author.

In 1997-1998, 37 households were surveyed in two villages of Tân Dân (Dương Trạch and Thọa Bình); 35 of them were studied in 2009; to these 35 households we added the study of their children’s activity – some in households of their own, others not – to reach a total sample of 83 households and 153 adults (>18 years) for whom productive activity was recorded. In 2009, the mean age of the head of the household was 40 years, the median age 35 years.

In this presentation, I will concentrate on the second period studied (1998-2009), but I must first recall the great transformation observed in the period 1986-1998.
First Phase of Agrarian Transition, mid-1980s to the End of the 1990s

The first phase of agrarian transition for Tân Đân and its inhabitants is marked by:

– labor and capital intensification (inputs and mechanization of certain agricultural operations and transportation) for agricultural production systems;
– diversification of agricultural and livestock systems away from a production system based on rice production and pig farming;
– increase in non-agricultural activities in the commune – commercial and service activities mostly linked to the agricultural transformation: sale of inputs, initial processing of the harvest, sale of common consumption goods, trading of agricultural surplus, services and salaried employment in transportation and construction (private housing);
– increase in salaried activities outside the commune, which is the case for poorer households.

At the end of the 1990s:

– three-quarters of the sampled households undertook both agricultural and non-agricultural activities;
– 17% of the households undertook only agricultural activities. This was in general the more socially established households, who had already started to accumulate land: rice fields at auction, acquisition of parcels of gardens around the house, etc. This phenomenon was also found among the older households, which lived off “comfortably” large gardens, developed into very lucrative plantations (peppers, decorative plants);
– 8% of the households practiced only non-agricultural activities: this is the case for wholesale merchants and the larger service (repairs and assembly of vehicles) or craft (wood and metal for the home) workshops. These households were forming family enterprises which could pay a few regular employees.

**Box 1 Importance of Non-agricultural Activities in 1997**

A pluri-active familial economy (1997)

– Households having agricultural and non-agricultural activities: 75%
– Households having agricultural activities only: 17%
– Households having non-agricultural activities only: 8%

Non-agricultural Activities

- 34% of household revenue in 1997
- > 40% of revenue for half of households

Activities Outside of Residence Community

- 15.6% of total household revenue in 1997
- > 40% for temporary migrants

Source: Author.
Thus, non-agricultural activities represent one-third of total household revenue, and more than 40% of total revenue for half the households. Activities outside the commune make up 15.6% of total household revenue, and more than 40% for temporary migrants; for example, workers who remain for several months on construction sites in Hà Nội.

Besides the transformation of systems for productive activity by the household, the first phase of the agrarian transition is distinguished by an intensification of city-country inter-relations:

– peasants “go to town” to get supplies, sell, work, train, get information, and live temporarily;
– urban actors invest in the countryside – especially suppliers of industrial products (agricultural inputs, construction materials, consumption products, etc.), and the buyers of agricultural products who come to Tân Dân, sign contracts, make down payments in cash or in kind.

Thus the agrarian transition of the end of the 1990s depends on the development of rural people’s pluri-activity (agricultural and non-agricultural) and mobility, synonymous with pluri-locality for some of them. It also depends on the opening and integration of village economies with markets and networks on a regional, national or even international scale (i.e. trade with China).

However, the agricultural progress of the commune is limited – concerning diversification of crops – and in any case is insufficient to meet the growing economic and social needs of the population. There was less development of non-agricultural activities locally than in the neighboring communities of Minh Châu (commerce and services) and Bình Minh (transformation and commerce of agricultural products). To supplement, the inhabitants of Tân Dân had to look for outside work, notably in the ceramic workshops of Bát Tràng, 15 km away, and on the construction sites of individual houses in the capital. These were the specialties of the inhabitants of Tân Dân.

Second Phase of Agrarian Transition, End 1990s to 2009

Where are we in 2009 with the same households and with the activities of their children? I will mainly focus on two age categories: 18-25 year olds and 26-35 year olds (age of the heads of household), who are the principal actors in the agrarian transition and who represent around 55% of the economically active population sample that I studied.
Decline of the Agricultural Sector

**Box 2  Figure Cultivated Areas**

- Decrease of one third (-34%) of the average cultivated area by household
  - 1997: 6.9 sao  
  - 2009: 5.6 sao
- Reasons for this evolution
  - Demographic growth
  - Conversion of agricultural land for industrial zone (0.4 sao / household sold to the city)
  - But decrease in proportion of households that plant
- 2009: 4 households out of 10 (38.6%) had never cultivated land of their own.
  - 68% for 26-35 year olds
  - 86% for 18-25 year olds

- End of “young peasants”
- Farms are pluri-active, and pluri-local

Source: Author.

We first observe a decline in the agricultural sector in terms of the area cultivated: it has shrunk by one fifth – 2,480m² in 1997, 2,020m² in 2009. This decline is more noticeable than during the period 1986-1998, which may be due to demographic growth and the conversion of arable land for the construction of an industrial zone (one third of the decrease). However, the proportion of households that cultivate the land has also decreased.
In 1997, all households had arable land. In 2009, one out of two did not have arable land – with the exception of a garden plot next to their house. This tendency is even more prevalent among those under 35 years old:

- for the 26-35 year old category, 68% of households do not have arable land;
- among the 18-25 year olds, 85% do not have arable land.

In 2009, four out of ten households had never cultivated land other than small gardens on their parents’ land before establishing their own household. This proportion rises to nearly 7 out of 10 (68%) among 26-35 year olds and almost 9 out of 10 (86%) among 18-25 year olds. We are seeing, at least provisionally, the beginning of the end of young peasants.

Besides the demographic factor (increase in population and population/arable land ratio), this phenomenon can be explained by the flattening out of agricultural revenue of “ordinary” peasants, the growing gap between agricultural and non-agricultural revenues and the differential in opportunities between the villages and the city. The phenomenon is reinforced by the growing economic and social needs of the populations. As a consequence of rural people looking for work, labor markets – it is more pertinent to call them hiring networks in my opinion – develop.

### Table 11: The “Decline” of the Agricultural Sector: Arable Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2009</th>
<th>Households without arable land</th>
<th>Households with arable land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>44.6%</strong></td>
<td>55.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 55 yrs</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55 yrs</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>92.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45 yrs</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35 yrs</td>
<td><strong>68.2%</strong></td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25 yrs</td>
<td><strong>85.7%</strong></td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author.
Increase and Transformation of Non-agricultural Activities

Figure 14  Increase of Non-agricultural Activities 1997-2009

In 2009

1 out of 2 actives (51.3%) is occupied full-time with non-agricultural activities

Two thirds of 26-35 and 36-45 yrs

Three fourths of under 26 yrs

Source: Author.

In 2009 in Tân Dân, one economically active person out of two was employed full-time in non-agricultural activities, a proportion which rises among the “youth” to two-thirds of 26-45 year olds and three-quarters of the under 26 year old age group. Unlike the preceding period, characterized by pluri-activity in three-quarters of households, the difference is now clearer between non-agricultural households (if agricultural activities subsist, they are only residual or occasional) and agricultural households, the latter benefitting from areas left (on loan or rental) by the former.

How do non-agricultural activities evolve? First, we observe a rise in salaried employment – 53% of economically active people have salaries – as opposed to self-employment which accounts for 46% of the active population. The employment transitions for the inhabitants of Tân Dân provide an illustration of what we see at a national level. The proportion of self-employment activities and commerce decline: the supply to rural merchants of drinks, detergents, fertilizer, etc. is done more and more by industrial enterprises; motorcycle maintenance is not very lucrative because of the large number of “stations”; street commerce on bicycles only brings in a small amount of revenue. These activities, characteristic of the years that followed the restoration of family farms, suffer from market saturation in rural communities and competition from industrial enterprises. The gulf between local and external job opportunities is growing just
as much. Factory work is more lucrative than many non-agricultural commercial activities, services and craft making; the inhabitants are unanimous on this point. The phenomenon is particularly noticeable in a community like Tân Dân, which is near the urban centers and now 15 minutes by bicycle from an industrial center (Yên Mỹ).

**Box 3  Evolution of Non-Agricultural Activities 2009 / 1997**

- **New Activities**
  - KCBT, independent or as an employee, ‘specialty’ of the community
  - Development of industrial wage labor
  - Sectors of Activity in 2009
    - Construction: 29% of active population
    - Industry: 27%
    - Services and commerce: 44%
- **Places/Poles of Employment Change**
  - 1990s: surrounding communities, Bat Trang, Hà Nội
  - 2009: Yen My (F), Hai Phong and Quang Ninh (H), Hà Nội, abroad

Among salaried activities, we observe an increase in the proportion of industrial employment, almost inexistent for the inhabitants of Tân Dân at the end of the 1990s. Among the active population counted in 2009, 27% worked in industry, 29% in construction and 44% in service and commerce. Women are the principal workers in shoe and parts manufacturing (electronics, transportation vehicles). Employment hubs change, especially with the factories built in 2000-2005 along route 39 surrounding the agglomeration of Yên Mỹ and the industrial zones around Hà Nội. Industrial employment was consolidated, meaning that it became more sustainable over the years: in 2006, women reported going to the factory doors each morning to see if there was work “that day”. The opportunity to work was therefore erratic: one day, several days, rarely more than two or three weeks in a row. The length of the job corresponded then to contracts received by the companies. The work was sometimes only paid after the delivery of the products by the company. The activity of industrial enterprises, and with it employment, was regularized; workers could now think about opportunities for overtime.

In Việt Nam, specialties can evolve quickly: in 2009, the inhabitants of Tân Dân no longer work in Bát Trắng. Many men are still in construction; as a proportion of all male workers they are even more numerous.
A new specialty was formed: cement cutting—often indicated by its initials KCBT—on construction sites, to make openings for doors and windows. At least one active person in 70% of the households interviewed in 2009 practiced this activity. KCBT is an independent activity—workers are recruited for the length of each project—as salaried employees, or as apprentices, which is a way to get into a hiring network and learn a trade—not for cutting the cement itself, but for managing the worksite. This trade is therefore one for men, but women play an important role because they often help on the worksites managed by their husbands, namely by cooking for the workers. Hải Phòng and Quảng Ninh provinces are the principal destinations for workers from Tân Dân.

**Box 4 More Stable, More Sustainable Non-agricultural Activities**

- **1990s: non-agricultural activity (still) occasional**
  - Pluri-activity (except the forming of familial non-agricultural enterprises)
  - Majority of households: 3-4 month stays as workers on construction sites in Hà Nội, then return
- **Years 2000: development of industrial salaried employment**
  - Daily search for work in Yên My
  - Not working every day, salaries paid late
- **2009: more regular hiring in factories of Yên My, overtime**

*Source: Author.*

Workers from Tân Dân will therefore go beyond the neighboring communities to find work. They also leave more often “as a family”, meaning with the spouse, children and sometimes the grandmother who looks after the children because the two parents work full time. Work in a factory or on outside construction sites does not offer the same organizational flexibility as agricultural work in the village.
With non-agricultural activities, migration evolves: it concerns the whole household and not only the economically active person, for longer periods of time and for more distant destinations. This transformation is linked to the relaxation of the residential permit system.

### More Sustainable Migration... Urbanization

- In 2009, 1 adult out of 3 lives mainly outside of Tân Đàn
  - 1997: 1 out of 20
- Proportion reversed for the youngest: 2 actives out of 3 (18-25 and 26-35 yrs) live outside of Tân Đàn
  - contrast with 1997: young households are formed by independent agricultural activities (cultivated areas other than that of their parents)
- Nevertheless, some return: from 45-50 years old, people ‘retire’
  - Return to the community about long term migration
  - Gradual transfer of agricultural land to children (according to their material comfort)

Source: Author.

### Where Do They Live?

**Principal place of residence of parents in 2009 and in 1997**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th></th>
<th>1997</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tân Đàn</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Tân Đàn</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outside Tân Đàn</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Outside Tân Đàn</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65 %</td>
<td>35 %</td>
<td>95 %</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 55 yrs</td>
<td>96 %</td>
<td>4 %</td>
<td>90 %</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55 yrs</td>
<td>77 %</td>
<td>23 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45 yrs</td>
<td>68 %</td>
<td>32 %</td>
<td>89 %</td>
<td>11 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35 yrs</td>
<td>54 %</td>
<td>46 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25 yrs</td>
<td>36 %</td>
<td>64 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Average age of 2009 sample: 40 yrs; from 1997: 44.4 yrs)

Source: Author.
In 2009, one adult out of three lived principally outside of Tân Dân, as opposed to one out of twenty in 1997. Among the younger active populations, 18-25 and 26-35 year-olds, two out of three lived outside of Tân Dân during the 2009 study. Another census is needed in order to understand this phenomenon. The contrast is marked in relation to the end of the 1990s, when young households set up their own independent agricultural activity on land other than that of their parents. Finally, if migration intensifies (in number and duration), it would also be necessary to consider the return of migrants who “retire”, after periods of five, six or fifteen years spent outside of the community.

**Conclusion**

[Mireille Razafindrakoto]

The presentations have shown the wealth of information provided by the combination of macro and micro readings and the numerous convergences that emerge from it. We observe the development of non-agricultural activities, a specific dynamic in the zones close to the large cities and a particular relationship which is formed between these two zones.

The micro aspect shows the opportunities open to the inhabitants of the Khoái Châu and Văn Giang districts with the development of salaried employment and industrial zones. From the macro point of view, the size of these large enterprises or industries remains very limited on a global level. Eventually, should individuals move toward informal activities? Will this phenomenon last despite the development of formal enterprises? How will this dynamic of peri-urban zones toward urban zones and toward industrial enterprises continue?

The significance of migrations must be underlined. On the macro level, migrants are not numerous, particularly in the informal sector. However, on the local scale, in the zones near the large cities, migration toward these zones is very sizable. We could be tempted to link informalization to migrants, who add to the number of people looking for work. However, we observe at the macro level that the migrants do not constitute the principal component of the labor force in the informal sector; this is formed more by locals. Thus, the informalization phenomenon may last, because it’s not just an accompaniment to urbanization. Migrations are nevertheless very significant around the large cities – namely Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City. Links between sectors and between zones should be strengthened.

Thank you.

**Exchanges...**

Rodolphe De Koninck

I have two questions after this very interesting and rich presentation. What proportion of agricultural workers are women? One of the characteristics of Southeast Asia is the feminization of agricultural work. Do women retain their share of employment as agricultural work declines? You spoke little about land issues which are fundamental in peri-urban regions. Is there speculation? Are the price and sale of land linked to the decline of agriculture and agricultural employment in these communities?
François Roubaud

On the national level, 50% of the labor force is female if we consider all categories of employment; they make up 52% in agriculture. Most of the growth of the female labor force is because of hiring by foreign companies, much more than in agriculture; two out of three jobs in foreign companies are held by women.

Christophe Gironde

I wouldn’t say feminization of agricultural labor; the situation can be very different from one commune to the next according to professional specialization. Women are present in non-agricultural activities, notably in commerce, even doing manual labor on construction sites; the husbands are left to carry out the agricultural tasks. The industrial wage labor in Yên Mỹ for example is composed mainly of young women, their husbands working in agriculture. Certain commercial activities are often exclusively reserved for women: for example, in the commune neighboring Tân Dân, Minh Châu, women have long ago developed a triangular commerce – Minh Châu - Hà Nội - Lạng Sơn (trading Chinese products). The reason is fairly trivial and simple: if the men went to Lạng Sơn, they would spend more money than they would bring back!

Concerning land, there was a very sharp rise in land prices, especially plots for habitation and plots along the principal axes of communication which are good venues for commercial, craft or service activities. The price of agricultural land is rising as well, in line with the value of its product; the greatest price increases are for rice fields, which can be converted into orchards. The rise in land prices also surely reveals speculation, especially for areas close to or along roads which will be widened or opened or near future industrial zones.

Đào Bích Hà, Social Sciences and Humanities University - Hồ Chí Minh City

Can you quantify the migratory aspects? The male/female ratio?

Yves Perraudeau, Nantes University

You’re touching on the problem of abrupt changes. In economics and economic history, there are two major schools of thought: one is brutal, with the notion of revolution, industrial revolution, where we find the Rostovian model; the other proposes transitions, more gentle and gradual changes, and here we find the work of Asselin and the phenomenon of proto-industrialization with Mendels or Doyon. Do you think that we are in an example of proto-industrialization which will lead us not to an industrial revolution and a brutal rupture, but more toward gentle change?

Lê Hồ Phong Linh, Economic Research Institute, Hồ Chí Minh City

It seems to me that the proportion of immigrant workers in the informal sector is slight. How have you done your sampling?

Mireille Razafindrakoto

I will answer the question about migration which highlights the limitations of the different approaches and the complementarity of a macro and micro reading. What do we manage to get from the figures from the official surveys of the GSO? This will depend on the definition of the sample. Whereas, when we study Hà Nội or Hồ Chí Minh City, the sample is composed of people who are already counted as residents.
in these cities. Some of these people slip through the cracks; part of the labor force is not identified as being local. What is the real significance of this migrant labor force? Therein lies the question.

Jean-Pierre Cling

If we limit ourselves to the question of employment, the transformation of employment in Việt Nam is very rapid. We find ourselves in the first type of abrupt change. Look at the numbers: 65% of jobs were agricultural in 1998, less than 50% in 2006. The decrease in agricultural employment is marked and it continues. Also, industrial employment is growing by around 20% per year. These are indicators of a rapidity of change that is almost unique in the world, with the exception of maybe China.

François Roubaud

I think that there is no ambiguity about the agrarian transition’s starting point, which is the decline of agricultural employment. The big question is to understand where this transition is leading. In the aggregated statistics presented yesterday, industrialization was evident, but which kind? We see here that it principally involves an informal industrialization. The formal industries like the large factories that you can see on the road to the airport in Hà Nội – Canon or Panasonic, for example – remain a minority. Foreign companies represent fewer than two million jobs for a total of 50 million. So, is this shift to the informal sector transitory (an ante-chamber) or is it meant to last? For the majority of the Latin-American countries, for example, or for a certain number of emerging countries in Asia, such as Indonesia or Thailand, it is the latter – a sort of trap for countries with intermediary revenue. For Vietnam, therein lies the question. The first movement from agriculture toward something that resembles industry is done. However, the transition of these informal industrial jobs toward modern, formal industry is absolutely not guaranteed. In the short and medium term, it is very clear that these industrial jobs will remain informal for a long time.

Christophe Gironde

A short word on the proto-industrialization that we could look for in familial non-agricultural enterprises. In the first phase, these enterprises have grown, with for example the development of metal working or the improvement and perfection of product quality. However, as early as the 1990s, there were some companies that were manufacturing plastic bags or cardboard containers. In 2009, I did not observe a noticeable evolution in the production process: only the revenue or the volume of activity had evolved. Despite imitation and competition, I did not see the emergence of bigger units, nor did I see the accumulation of machines that performed better or allowed for the production of different products.

Rodolphe De Koninck

I would like to come back to the nature of industrialization. How do we measure it? What is its process? If we consider the case of South Korea, Taiwan or Japan, which benefitted from a very rapid agrarian transition – which depended on a specific state policy and on American financial support –, a characteristic of this small industry is that it was mostly developed with strong links to agriculture which was both client and supplier. Is Southeast Asia in the same situation? It is possible in Malaysia,
for example. How can we measure this interweaving theme?

Lê Xuân Thọ, University of Hà Nội

Is it possible to extend your results to the entire country? What are the official data for Việt Nam? Finally, can you explain why you have made a division into four zones and not into two – urban and rural?

Nguyễn Thị Thanh An, AFD

The informal sector is a major component of the economy in Việt Nam. However, this domain is neglected by the government. In the context of your work, have you made recommendations in terms of public policy to the local and national authorities?

Lê Thị Hồng Hải, Việt Nam Academy of Social Sciences

Mr. Gironde, could you describe in detail the methods used to carry out your field work: duration, number and classification of the samples?

Christophe Gironde

I conducted my study for three weeks in the fall of 2009. My sample was composed of thirty or so households, which were part of my sample of 37 households in 1997. The construction of the sample was not intended for a “national coverage survey”, it was rather a purposive sample. It is a mode of sampling we can use when we spend a long time in a commune. As always in such a case, the authorities choose the first households to be interviewed. After that, the construction of a purposive sample is veritable research work; it involves an iterative process, a search for differences and similarities among the households selected.

Concerning the seasonality of activities, the most important fact to note is the transition from a system of productive activities based on the agricultural calendar to a regular system of activities “directed” by its most important component, industrial wage labor. Workers stay at the factory, like other non-agricultural workers who do not want to stop work to go back to the village to plant or harvest rice. Seasonality is no longer a major characteristic of non-agricultural employment of rural people.

Mireille Razafindrakoto

Public policies ignore the informal sector. It was neither identified nor quantified before our studies. We are now in contact with officials from different ministries who now realize its importance. Several questions have come up: how to encourage this sector to modernize and formalize without disrupting its dynamic? How can we improve its integration with the rest of the growing economy? How to protect jobs in this sector, which has precarious working conditions?

Concerning migrants; just a reminder that the official studies do not necessarily register all migrants because of the definition of survey basis in official studies done in Việt Nam. Nevertheless, changes have begun recently.

Why did we choose to create four zones: urban communes of Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City, peri-urban zones surrounding Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City, urban and rural communes? We were interested in the urbanization phenomenon and the process of economic transition. We noticed that there were dynamics surrounding the large cities; some ancient, such as the craft village phenomenon, others more recent. This choice of division allows us to shine a light
on very specific dynamics, totally obscured by the traditional urban / rural division. It is nevertheless imperfect – for example, peri-urban areas exist in the country’s other large cities –, and the methodology should be revised so that we can address more satisfactorily the questions brought up here.

François Roubaud

The authorities have until now placed little importance on the informal sector. They consider it as a transitory state in the shift from the dominance of countryside-based agriculture to an industrial modernization. Judging from the historical experience of countries more advanced in the transition from rural to urban, this vision is naive. As of today, we have had little response to our work in terms of any drafting of policies specially designed for the informal sector. It will surely take time, as the subject is very new in this country. In the meantime, we imagine that the recommendations to implement will come initially not from the government, but rather from NGOs, such as Oxfam; they are closer to the field and have started to show a strong interest in this sector.

Reading (tamdaoconf.com)

1.4. Transformations of the Family in Europe. What Are its Traits? How should we Analyze and Understand Them?

Martine Segalen, University of West Paris - Nanterre

When we take a quick look at changes in the institution of family, we can see that the “theory” of transition, if indeed it exists, is inapplicable, and that we are dealing with a very complex model which includes very complex economic, cultural and religious data.

One needs multiple approaches to study complex situations such as family structures and values in different socio-economic contexts. Before getting to the heart of the presentation, I should point out that more than any other aspect of society, the institution of family is the place for ideologies: is it a societal microcosm? What are the links between it and the state?

This presentation will begin by examining the exceptional nature of European marriage in the world’s cultures, followed by a look at the diversity of modes of organization of European peasant societies, then it will address the development of the social classes after industrialization, and finish with a discussion of theories on the transformation of family.

1.4.1. European Marriage: an exception among the world’s cultures

It is important to realise that, as far as we can see from sources starting in the XVIIth century, western marriage presents very distinctive characteristics in relation to what we know about societies outside of Europe.

Marriage appears to be a powerful demographic regulator. In a society without contraception, the number of people entering into marriage and having access to sexuality (thus procreation), and the age at which these people start to reproduce, in correlation with the mortality and emigration rate determine demographic changes. For a long time, demographers have neglected issues around marriage because marriage, in
and of itself, does not influence population levels. But, because of its consequences, it is a determining factor in population balance.

Marriage in historic European populations (starting from the XVIIth century) is characterized by the advanced age of marrying couples, which not only has consequences for demographics (limiting births), but also for the organization of society, questions of inheritance, and the way in which couples function. This was a surprising discovery for demographers who studied the issue because, before their research, one of the misconceptions about the family was that people married at a young age, at the age of Romeo and Juliet. From the end of the XVIth century, when parish records begin to give us precise information, we can see that the average marrying age for working class people from rural and urban areas was 27-28 years old for boys and 25-26 for girls. Late marriage appears to be a characteristic of western society, a unique model in the panoply of cultures (John Hajnal, 1965). In most non-European societies, and up until the 1980s, couples were composed of adolescent, or even pre-pubescent spouses, who were taken care of by the family into which they married. Late marriage, in contrast, could be a sign of a certain individualization of couples who must wait for the death of their parents and their part of the inheritance before setting up their own home. In reality, as research on succession systems shows, peasant couples are provided for by their parents as much as in non-European societies. It’s the scarcity of land, the limitation of rural resources that most limits the marriage rate. As proof, we see that the age decreases when industrial employment allows young people to earn a living.

The noteworthy consequence of this “delay” in marrying is the shortening of the child-bearing period for women. Instead of procreating from the age of 20 up to 45 years old, they will not start child-bearing until the age of 25 or 26, which reduces the number of children by at least 3, as we know now that the fertility model historically was one child every 18 or 24 months, not every year.

Sociologists have long believed that this model was the result of industrialization. However, this western cultural invention seems much more ancient. From the XIIth century, with the influence of the Christian church, marriage becomes a sacrament, which reinforces the importance of the couple to the detriment of the institution of lineage. This new doctrine of filiation, inheritance and marriage ends up by separating individuals from their kin, in reducing the notion of “heir” to its most simple biological form. Adoption allowed lineages to ensure they had descendants, if couples were sterile or if their children died, and therefore to maintain the ancestor cult: then it becomes forbidden; ecclesiastic communities take over responsibility for the souls of those who die childless. The imposition of exogamy leads to the fluidity of inheritance, “divergent” devolution disperses the inheritance among the different branches of the family.

Thus, late marriage has consequences for this historic western characteristic, the development of individualism, and the relative detachment of the couple from its extended family.
1.4.2. Residence and Social Organization in European Peasant Societies: Diversity of Family Structures

As far back as historical documents go, and set in the context of research on forms and functions of family and kinship, several models of families can be found among the working classes, for the most part peasants and craftsmen. Here, many demographic, historic and ethnological considerations intersect.

What are the residential configurations?

Historians from the Cambridge Group for the study of population and Social Structure, under the direction of Peter Laslett (1972) proposed a typology that tries to put the data into some kind of order. This classification distinguishes four categories:

- domestic groups “without family structure” which we cannot define as anything other than old friends sharing the same household. This category is most often made up of lone individuals;
- “simple” domestic groups which correspond to a household, a family unit: these are composed of either the father, mother and children, or a widow or widower with children, excluding all other relatives;
- “extended” domestic groups which, in addition to the members of a simple family unit, are composed of ascending, descending or collateral relatives, meaning the father or the mother of the head of the household, a grandson, or granddaughter of the head of the household or of his wife, or a brother, sister, nephew or grand-nephew. The extension basically means the addition of a fairly close relative, a kind of satellite relative, to a central conjugal core;
- “multiple” domestic groups where several related households live together, thus the name “poly-nuclear”.

One of the criteria of classification is based on who leads the domestic group, which introduces distinctions sometimes more formal than real. Moreover, the family life cycle and the family life course must be taken into account in the analysis.

Without getting into the detail of discussions on family life cycles, we can say that a couple forms by marriage, has children, can go on to share a farm with the parents of one partner, which they will later leave or, on the contrary, take full responsibility for, while keeping under their protection an elderly father or single sister. During this cycle, different forms of the domestic group have appeared: simple, complex, extended or poly-nuclear. Thus all domestic groups are like processes; a census fixes the image of a type of household that can actually be temporary. Bringing back a longer timescale can allow us to understand whether the configurations of domestic groups are structural or cyclical. Are households always multiple or always conjugal? Do they experience a typical succession of phases, and if so, what is its model? How can we explain the gap between the norm and the average once a determined model has been recognized as such?

The introduction of a dynamic dimension in the study of domestic groups is therefore a major advance, revealing their extraordinary plasticity. The analysis of certain crucial moments in the cycle – such as the period of fission of a domestic group – thus allows us to understand the relationship between
the sexes and generations. Nevertheless, the faults of the concept of the cycle of family life turned out to be serious in that these stages were modeled on those of contemporary American families, and referred to stages of parenthood – birth of children, widowhood and family dissolution – rather than transitions such as the departure of young adults, marriage, etc.

This is why sociologists and social historians, especially on the other side of the Atlantic, have forged the concept of family life course. Glen Elder (1978) and Tamara Hareven (1978) launched a series of parallel studies on the social changes affecting individuals and the domestic groups in which they live. How do major changes, like entering school, or the work force, or marriage occur? Consequently, the study focuses on the strategies of the individual regarding these issues, and on the domestic group and the other social resources to which he/she may have access. The advantage of this approach is better to link the socio-historical context with the changes observed in domestic groups. Thus the rhythm and definition of the transitions of life seem to be linked to historical and social contexts. Because in the past individual lives were closely tied into the collective family, many decisions that we consider to be individual decisions today were integrated into communal strategies of domestic groups.

Three types of domestic groups emerge from this classification

We see these groups throughout Europe, in relation to the laws and regulations concerning property and its development. Residential configurations are associated with types of inheritance, which can be classified according to several models in Europe. They are interlinked in complex ways with the different modes of land development (ownership, tenant farming, even serfdom) (cf. Burguière et al, talique 1994).

– In Russia, Serbia, Hungary, Romania, Albania, Yugoslavia, in Slavic countries but also in certain regions of Italy (Tuscan smallholdings, for example), we very commonly see extended domestic group configurations, like in the “communautés taisibles” in central France, associating several generations and married brothers and their wives, under the responsibility of the father of the family. In these communities, property, work and meals are shared. Their founding ideology is the continuity of the lineage through that of the house, an entity that is physical and symbolic at the same time. Here also, the architecture of the houses is intimately linked to the familial and social organization: e.g. duplexes, houses with a central hearth surrounded by sleeping chambers, or long houses – a model that is common among the minorities that live in Việt Nam, such as the Bahnar or the Ede.

Of all the models of the extended family in Central and Southern Europe, the Yugoslavian Zadruga is the object of particular study. Shared residences and meals were fundamental. However, small structures for each young couple, annexes to the main house but neither heated nor furnished with a cooking space, demonstrated the beginning of the individualization of the conjugal couple. Goods were the indivisible property of men; women were excluded according to the common law of exheredation of girls, who only received a personal sum at the time of their marriage, without being able to acquire goods.
– The stem-family or “house system” and unequal system.

This is a model which is very common in different peasant societies in France (and elsewhere in Europe). Initially, we thought that it was a familial configuration specific to the Southwest, and notably the regions on each side of the Pyrenees mountain range; then examples were found in the Central West, the Southeast and in the Alps region; some cases were even found in the Lorraine region, where in the XIXth century, social structures still exhibited traces of the turbulence of the Dukedom. The geography of the stem-family is complex. Although we find it most often in countries of the North Mediterranean region (Italian Alps, Catalonia, Basque Country, North Portugal) etc., it is not a Mediterranean-wide model; on the contrary, the emphasis has always been on the nuclear nature of the domestic group in certain regions of Spain, Italy or Portugal. The stem-family has three characteristics. First, it is made up of a domestic group which gathers three generations under the same roof; the father and mother, one of the married sons and his wife and their children, to which could be added other children who remain single, plus domestic help. In his work, Organisation de la famille, Frédéric Le Play (1855) describes the Lavedan family which includes 18 people: a grandparent, the mother and father, the heir and his wife, nine children, two single relatives and two domestic employees.

Second principle: the domestic group is closely identified with the house (called oustal in Occitan). This is the institution which encompasses, as well as the residential farm and its dependent structures, buildings and land, the rights to common goods which count significantly toward the property’s prosperity. The rights to use water, forests and communal pasture resources, and an area in the cemetery, were attributed to each oustal. From one generation to the next, this complex ensemble of material and immaterial assets had to be handed down in its entirety. The honor of each of its owners depended on handing it down intact to his heir, while maintaining the area of farmland included in it as well as its reputation among the other houses that made up the village community.

Two consequences flow from this principle: the house bestows upon all of its members its reputation and prestige. There is no individual social position. This explains the surname that is attached to the civil name of each member of the stem-family, corresponding to the house where they live.

Finally, the house cannot be divided and only one child will inherit it. Although in certain regions girls may inherit, the general rule is that boys inherit from their fathers, a kind of succession that we will later call patrilinear filiation. The residence of the heir is also patrilocal because he must live with his father. As in the Yugoslavian Zadruga, the wife of the heir is always an outsider, subject to the authority of her mother-in-law. The other children, who are not heirs, have dowries and in this way are excluded from the inheritance: a small sum of money deprives them of any right to this main inheritance; the youngest children generally try to marry an heir from another house and “faire gendre” (become an in-law). Children who remain single stay in the house and tacitly relinquish their part of the inheritance to the heir. Their status is between that of a servant and a relative.

This system, of which the internal coherence is obvious, is now called a “house system”
in ethnological literature. In this domestic group unifying three, sometimes four generations, it is the older parent that has the authority. Nevertheless, we know that family development is not always uni-linear; the stem-family, latched onto its *oustal*, exists as much in its form as in its ideology and is even strengthened by modernity and integration in the national and international world.

– Finally, there is a much more egalitarian form, as in Brittany or in Normandy, where all the children inherit a share, not of the property itself but of tenant farms. Domestic groups are generally simple in form, and are mobile within a certain territory.

This is a rapid summary of the family structures in Europe on the eve of the industrial revolution; in addition there are the filiation systems of the nobility, and the middle-class family which will gradually assert itself with industrial development.

1.4.3. The XIXᵗʰ Century, Creation of Social Classes with Industrialization

The question of the transformation of familial systems comes to the fore at the start of the XIXᵗʰ century in France, and 50 years earlier in England. What is happening with the onset of industrialization and with it, the development of a class of salaried workers?

First, we must note that industry did not begin with the industrial revolution. In European countries, old-fashioned, piecemeal rural industries existed for a long time, situated near sources of energy, bodies of water or mines. Households are partly working in industry, but are still rural, and still belong to their original environment; they are part of the local community, participate in its traditional culture. The typical family working in the fields did not disappear with the development of large industry, to which it is a necessary complement. Even in England, up until the 1840s, a large quantity of industrial production came from family workshops. Towns like Manchester and Liverpool were not large industrial cities, but commercial crossroads that united a network of villages dominated by manufacturing production. In this economy, all family members were put to work. For example, in the Meuse Valley, several artisan households each had a small forge that employed the entire family. Contrary to poor peasant households which often placed their children in the service of other households at a young age, young children and adolescents were kept at home to help supplement the family’s meager earnings. The maintenance of this wider family was a way of distributing poverty among a larger number of people.

Worker Families: Proleterized or Resistant?

When a domestic group ceases to be a production group, does it necessarily become nuclear? The evolutionary outline which links industrialization with “nuclearization” of the domestic group is unfounded. Extended domestic groups were numerous in villages with a pre-industrial system, where rural craftsmen worked in the home; their production was sold in a market dominated by a capitalist economy. In towns in the process of industrialization, we do not see a nuclearization of the domestic group. In Preston (Lancashire), which industrialized very rapidly during the XIXᵗʰ century with the development of the textile industry, the census of 1851 showed 23% of domestic groups were “extended” or “multiple”. And so, in this industrial city, the structure of the
domestic group was more complex than that of the English parishes two centuries earlier. The urban-industrial revolution seems to have been associated with a considerable increase in co-residence between parents and married children. Moreover, as Michael Anderson explains in *Household and Family in Past Time* (1971), a large number of elderly lived with their children, in larger proportions than today. The development of the multiple or extended domestic group was justified by the economic constraints of industrial work: lack of housing, obligation for the mother to work, and difficulties of minding small children indicate that cohabitation was probably a necessity rather than a choice. In the absence of truly effective social protection in the case of sickness or poverty, the individual had no other solution than to turn toward his closest relatives, by forming enlarged domestic groups within which developed a reciprocal aid network.

In a way, the two domains – industrial life and family life – seemed far removed from one another for a long period, and authors tend to agree with the dramatic description of Edward Thompson (1958), describing the effects of the industrial revolution:

“Each stage in industrial differentiation and specialization struck also at the family economy, disturbing customary relations between man and wife, parents and children, and differentiating more sharply between “work” and “life”. Meanwhile, the family was roughly torn apart each morning by the factory bell” (p. 416)

But contrary to what the sociologists of the 1960s supposed, historic examples show the role that family and kinship institutions played in the implementation of the complex phenomenon that we call industrialization, and the strength and endurance of these institutions. Even in the worst conditions imposed by economic and social upheavals, people tried to use strategies to protect their own interests: and these involved kinship organization.

The impact of family influence on industrial organization shows in many ways: facilitating the adaptation of its members by finding them work and lodging; providing moral support in critical situations; encouraging the rotation of personnel; contributing to the placement of its members and exerting a certain control over the daily routine of work.

The family absorbed the shocks of industrial society by providing a framework for adaptation.

In single-industry cities, which now belong to the past, kinship and industry provided mutual support. Groups of domestic workers were veritable production units employing all members (father, mother, children). For a century, from 1870 to 1970, the textile industry in the city of Elbeuf functioned this way. The enterprises favored a great stability of personnel, employing several generations of families. In fact, one could only be hired on the recommendation of someone known as a good worker, and similarly, as a child, one “learned” the factory, the world of textiles, in the bosom of the family. If the destinies of the factory and the families were linked, it was because the arrangement was of mutual benefit: the families were assured of stable employment and easy job placement and the bosses were assured of docile and capable workers, all within a framework of a paternalistic association of love of one’s work and family spirit.
Salaried employment allowed individuals to free themselves from paternal support, which explains the fall in the age of marriage observed in Europe in the XIXth century. If they weren’t going to inherit, young people could do without their parents’ approval.

**Appearance of the Middle Class Family Model**

In the XIXth century the middle class family, which develops alongside noble families in towns and cities, has a major impact. No matter how wealthy they are, they all share an ideology that unifies them despite their differences in status: they place the institution of family – whether that is a married couple or the kinship network with which it is integrated – at the center of their values.

In dynamic capitalism, the middle class family is defined as the social order in which all deviation is banished. In this melting pot are forged the values necessary for individual accomplishment, fruit of the moral virtues instilled over a long period of socialization. Thus, over the course of one century, the middle class gave birth to a model that would end up destroying itself: the conjugal couple would be undermined by the rise of individualism and various social, economic and cultural factors.

The capitalist middle class of the XIXth century is built on the family, and the stakes of matrimony are of utmost importance, given the capital investments necessary. But even more than this, family values of solidarity – which also imply tension and crises – become enshrined in economic logic. This is strange given that family values are not mercantile values and family relations are not used for maximizing profits. Whether in the textile families of the north, east or center of France, one sees two family names associated in the name of the company.

The middle class produces an extremely standardized set of family morals which is imposed upon all society. These ethnohistorical facts should be seen alongside theories on family change, which propose the idea of the “traditional family” – which existed for barely 100 years between 1870 and 1960 – within which the roles of men and women are differentiated and the couple benefitted from the support of the welfare state. The myth of the traditional family is invented in the 1960s-70s, reflecting the social disarray resulting from profound changes to the institution, which have raised fears and led to the development of a debate on the “crisis” of the family.

1.4.4. Some Theories on the Transformation of the Family

The transformation of the family is often qualified as modernization. There are several models.

**Democratic Modernity**

First of all, democratic modernity as it is defined by Tocqueville who observes in the example of the young United States the effects of the establishment of democratic societies on the institution of family.

This democratic system, characterized by instability, is marked above all by the weakening of two aspects of paternal and patriarchal authority: the relationship between generations and the links created by inheritance.

The disappearance of the right of the oldest to inherit – established by the Napoleonic
Code – renders society more mobile and “each one can expect to be treated the same as all the others in his relations with public power. No longer can any fatality, any decree from a superior order hold an individual indefinitely at the summit or at the bottom of the social ladder. No longer can any link of personal dependence screen this individual from the political authority over him. This type of society favors individualism; each individual destiny can be the object of legitimate hopes. It also favors the blossoming of a sense of equality: the acquisitions of one can easily become the hopes of another”.

“In countries which are aristocratically constituted with all the gradations of rank, the government never makes a direct appeal to the mass of the governed: as men are united together, it is enough to lead the foremost, the rest will follow. This is equally applicable to the family, as to all aristocracies which have a head. Amongst aristocratic nations, social institutions recognize, in truth, no one in the family but the father; children are received by society at his hands; society governs him, he governs them. Thus the parent has not only a natural right, but he acquires a political right, to command them: he is the author and the support of his family; but he is also its constituted ruler. In democracies, where the government picks out every individual singly from the mass, to make him subservient to the general laws of the community, no such intermediate person is required: a father is there, in the eye of the law, only a member of the community, older and richer than his sons (...).”

“Perhaps the subdivision of estates – writes Tocqueville (1835) – which democracy brings about –, contributes more than anything else to change the relations existing between a father and his children. When the property of the father of a family is scanty, his son and himself constantly live in the same place, and share the same occupations. Habit and necessity bring them together, and force them to hold constant communication, the inevitable consequence is a sort of familiar intimacy, which renders authority less absolute, and which can ill be reconciled with the external forms of respect. Now, in democratic countries, the class of those who are possessed of small fortunes is precisely that which gives strength to the notions and a particular direction to the manners of the community. That class makes its opinions preponderate as universally as its will, and even those who are most inclined to resist its commands are carried away in the end by its example. I have known eager opponents of democracy who allowed their children to address them with perfect colloquial equality. Thus, at the same time that the power of aristocracy is declining, the austere, the conventional, and the legal part of parental authority vanishes, and a species of equality prevails around the domestic hearth.”

Tocqueville thus observes the rise of individualism and of sentiments felt by the couple, like the sentiments of affection and proximity felt notably between father and son. Having been raised according to the strict rules of aristocratic respect between father and son, he is struck by the liberty of tone that reigns between the generations in the United States.

Changes in Family Structure

The second theme of modernity we find particularly in Durkheim, who highlights the changes in the family structure: “The contraction of the family is correlative to the ‘extension of the social environment’, from the village to the city, from the city to the state; it
manifests itself by the ‘gradual weakening of family communism’, things that are owned in common which constitute a familial cement which are gradually appropriated individually. Not only does the family’s power of coercion (for example in the choice of a spouse) disappear, but with the rise of the salaried working class, family members are no longer assigned to the management of the family inheritance.”

Modern family ties are no longer founded on inheritance. What links the generations is an elective affection, which is much more fragile. With the weakening of the sentiment of “family communism”, defined as the “identity, the fusion of all the consciences within one common conscience which embraces them” (1975, p. 42), the modern family gives way to individuality.

As a counterpoint, these transformations occur under the eye of the state. “The state has become a factor in domestic life” (1975, p. 38). Durkheim observes the emergence of public policies on childhood, debates on social protection (retirement, health-care insurance); he is a contemporary of the law that abolished paternal power. With clear foresight, he predicts the growing role of the state in the private realm of the conjugal family.

**The Modernity of Feelings and the Rise of Privacy**

Philippe Ariès (1960) considers that the “modern” family is associated with the invention of new feelings, those of childhood and privacy. Up until the XVIIth century, the conjugal family hardly existed; it was under the control of the local community and the kinship network that sanctioned any variations. The idea of childhood was equally unheard of in the sense that the specific characteristics of this age group were barely recognized. Infant mortality was considered to be natural and the infant that survived the perilous first months and years of life became a small adult, dressed like his elders and involved in their tasks as an apprentice. According to Philippe Ariès, the child would be gradually separated from the adult world and the family would develop its role as educator. During this process, the family would form a wall between itself and society, the wall of privacy. For Ariès, family modernity is found there: instead of being attached to an inheritance or a name, the family turns toward the conjugal cell which will be the place where the child is socialized. Thus, the ideas of childhood and conjugality go hand in hand. And let us point out that the rise of these ideas is linked to the introduction of birth control and the voluntary decrease in family size.

**The Invention of the Traditional Family by Sociology in the 1950s and 1960s**

When the sociologists of the 1950s and 1960s studied the family, for them, “modernity” went together with the industrial society, associated or even confused with urbanization. They did a great deal of work on the opposition between “traditional” society and “industrial” (and urban) society which signified for them a completed model, in every sense of the word.

According to Talcott Parsons (1955), the process of industrialization segmented the family, first by isolating it from its kinship network, then by decreasing the size of the domestic group to that of a conjugal household with a small number of children. This group is now only a unit of consumption and residence; it has lost
its functions of production, its political and religious functions; it shares its financial and educational responsibilities with other institutions. This domestic group, isolated from its kin, is founded on a marriage that associates partners who have chosen each other freely; it is oriented toward values of rationality and efficiency; specialized roles for men and women contributing to the maintenance of a familial sub-system in the heart of the social system. The father occupies an "instrumental" role, ensuring a link with society and provider of material goods; the woman has the "expressive" role within the family. This thesis was functionalist in that it affirmed the appropriateness of this family model with the economic characteristics of contemporary society of the time. Social mobility, a cause and condition of economic development, happened with the rupture of kinship links. Moreover, this thesis revealed some social psychology. According to Parsons, in a society of autonomous individuals, the “raison d’être” of the family – comprising a structure of differentiated roles – resides above all in the socialization of the children and the stabilization of the adult person.

Modernity, here incarnated by the industrial society, would have overturned the old-style family in terms of its structure, its functioning and its relationships with society. Talcott Parsons characterized the family thus as a social group organized around an ensemble of values opposed, or even contradictory to those that structured modern post-war society. Modern (industrial) society was dominated by economy and rationality. In the family, tradition ruled; it belongs to social forms that were survivors, archaisms, or even anachronisms in a world dominated by the values of rationality. Family relations and economic relations were considered to be incompatible structural principles. Industrial production could not have established itself without destroying the kinship structures and more generally the local social structures. For Parsons, industrialization demanded the dissolution of family ties and the reduction of the domestic group to a nuclear form, made up of only one economically active member (the husband). And, of course, this new model was the expression of progress.

Another sociologist from this period went even further and predicted, in the post-war euphoria, that this model of the “modern family”, founded on the free choice of spouse and valuing love, would spread over the world progressively as the world modernized. William Goode (1963) prophesied that the “modern” conjugal system would succeed in developing societies. Young people would establish neolocal residences, would free themselves from family constraints in choosing a spouse; the number of children would be limited; the conjugal relationship, based on reciprocal attraction, would be reinforced. “The ideology of the conjugal family is a radical ideology, which destroys the ancient traditions of societies”.

This thesis did not survive and its brutal dualist opposition died with it: it did not survive criticism by historians, or the reality of sociological and cultural change.

To Conclude: Diversity of Family Models in Europe in 2010

Today Europe is witness to a diversity of family models. Great demographic transformations have taken place since 1965, but social turbulence continues.
The characteristics are the following:

- nuclear couples, single-parent families, recomposed families, widespread divorce all co-exist;
- the marriage rate is decreasing in a number of countries; the birth rate holds steady thanks, in France in any case, to vigorous public policies to protect women's jobs;
- we have come full circle in some ways, in that families are now founded, via the birth of a child, by couples older than they were 20 years ago;
- inter-generational relationships are very important in contemporary society; grandparents look after grandchildren in order to help their own children, both of whom are engaged in the labor market;
- Europe generally offers families the security of the welfare state.

Women's rights were the initiator of these changes; the relationship of domination between the sexes was displaced by the search for equality between the sexes. Today, new values are at the foundation of society, the values of liberty and individualism.

Some see the end of the family in these new familial forms; others see a new modality in which the strength of filial relationships compensates for conjugal instability, without putting the entire institution in question. In 2010, these transformations are accepted in that they are matched by changes to the laws in most European countries stating that women are equal to men, and by public policies that support the desire of women to work as well as have children.

As for the issue of "transition", it is obvious that this term does not apply to the family, because there is no beginning and no end. Families exist as long as there is a human society.

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Exchanges...

Nicolas Zufferey, University of Geneva

The one child policy in China has provoked some abrupt and radical changes in the family structure. Presently, the nuclear family is most common, one household with two parents and their child. Nevertheless, concerning this classification, I would like to point out the importance of the grandparents: for example, in the large cities, they often bring their grandchildren to school and after-school activities, as the parents do not have enough time to do it. Also, there is still a real difference between family structures in the country and those in the city in China today.

Doesn’t the image of the couple and family that you have presented correspond more specifically to France than to Europe in general? Aren’t there nuances according to the regions or are we talking about a homogenous model?

Bernard Formoso, University of West Paris - Nanterre

The elements of modernity mentioned by Martine Ségalen function in Europe, but are more nuanced in Confucian societies. This family model maintains a close dialectical relationship with the state, so much so that in Europe, we are citizens before we are “someone’s son”. In a Confucian model, we can be a citizen as well as “someone’s son”, at least in the metaphorical meaning of the word: the state is like a collective father. This relationship with the state is not necessarily different in the Vietnamese context, where we have seen that in the communist era, the state arranged marriages based on ideological criteria, which is analogous to what happened in the past. In some cases, the party functioned as a marriage agency in order to find husbands for young women who found it difficult to get married. The modern government took over modes of operation which had functioned previously.

Philippe Antoine, IRD

I very much appreciated this presentation which treats the evolution and transformation of the family over a very long period of time. I have one question about contemporary demographic ageing. What are the prospects, the possible evolutions ahead with the ageing of the European population? Won’t grandparents be torn between taking care of their grandchildren and their own parents?

Yves Perraudeau, Nantes University

When you speak about strongly family-based financing in the French case, it is true that we have not seen a development of the banking system as in England or Germany for historic
reasons, among others the unfortunate experience of John Law. However, was the family more important in financing in France than in other European countries? This is uncertain, because of the network of lawyers which acted, in a way, as the local banks which were starting to appear in other European countries.

The other nuance is the regional aspect of the evolution of inheritance; I refer to the work of sociologist Hervé Lebras who differentiated various "dispositions": a very "catholic" familial disposition which characterized the west of France; for the area from Bordeaux to Lyon, and all of the South, a farming disposition, and finally, the central Parisian region characterized by mobility and flexibility. It is thus possible to distinguish a regionalization of inheritance in France.

Hem Sokly, URDSE Cambodia

How do you define family? Do concubinage and homosexual marriage enter into your definition?

Martine Segalen

As regards the importance of grandparents in China, it is possible to find this trait in France as well; and to answer Philippe Antoine's question, this remains closely tied to the issue of residential proximity and the residential market strategy. Some very interesting work by Catherine Bonvalet from the INED shows that despite the difficulties in the housing market, couples make real efforts to stay close to grandparents. We note that contemporary grandparents are much more involved in the care of their grandchildren than before. At the time of geographic mobility, 50 or 70 years ago, two models emerged: the grandparents were in the country and families did not see them often; or when the parents worked and did not have any help at home, they sent their children to the country to be raised by their grandparents. This model was common up until the 1960s. The phenomenon disappeared, but this did not decrease the strong interaction with the grandparents.

To go back to the very pertinent remarks of Yves Perraudeau, the model that I presented seemed slightly linear because of time constraints, but there is obviously a complexity of models in the country, and this reflects the comments of Hervé Lebras on the forms of inheritance and their ideology, which are very different in the East, Brittany, the Southwest, etc. There is a lot of diversity in Europe, which I did not have time to discuss during this presentation.

To come to Bernard Formoso's remarks, it is interesting to see that the world of kinship is taken over by the political world: Uncle Hồ, Stalin the "little father of the people", Uncle Mitterrand, Uncle Sam, etc. Kinship vocabulary is appropriated by the political world but also that of consumerism: Uncle Ben for rice, "Bonne Maman" jams, etc.

Concerning the ageing demographic, we will see an entire generation of women that are between 50 and 60 years old and in good health, but are torn between caring for their grandchildren and supporting their parents. This demographic ageing brings significant challenges.

To answer Hem Sokly, I do not define family. If we define the family, we create exclusions. For example in France, there was a period where the number of households headed by single women with children rose; from the moment that the term single-parent family was invented, these marginalized women
were included in the panoply of families. I would not put concubinage on the same footing as same-sex marriage. Concubinage is a very old practice; between the XVI\textsuperscript{th} and XVII\textsuperscript{th} century the Church started to require couples to be married religiously. For a long time, couples did not know if they were really married or not. When they had a child, girls dragged their fiancé to the ecclesiastic court which forced the father to take responsibility if they were not married. Paradoxically, when the Church imposed its doctrine, women were less protected: if you were not married, you were not considered to be a family.

Today, the term concubinage has a common, working-class, slightly pejorative connotation. The term couple is used more often. In 1998, France implemented a sort of light marriage contract, the PACS (Civil Solidarity Pact). It is interesting to note that currently in France, the number of marriages is declining and the number of PACS, which was initially designed for same-sex couples, is rapidly increasing: 250,000 marriages, 180,000 PACS. We can expect an equal number of the two models in a few years. Nowadays, concubinage – under another name – is perfectly accepted. With same-sex marriages, we can see a considerable evolution in French society, which will no doubt end up recognizing same-sex parents.

The PACS is a first step toward the recognition of same-sex couples, since it was above all designed for homosexuals. Pressure exists, nevertheless, for the right to adopt and the right of homosexuals to have access to medically assisted procreation. A rapid and important shift in values, supported by the law, has taken place and is linked in part to phenomena such as the AIDS epidemic and the visibility of homosexuals.

Rodolphe De Koninck, Montreal University

In your presentation, I appreciated your treatment of the presence and management of work in society through the family. The terms sweating system and sweat shops allude to work carried out to some extent unofficially in developing countries. You are very careful and do not employ the economic function of the family in society on the subject of work and education. Is there an erosion or disappearance of the function of education and teaching in the family?

Francois Roubaud, IRD – DIAL

You mentioned Hervé Lebras, and not Emmanuel Todd, who also outlined family structures in France, Europe and the world. What is your point of view on these ideas?

My second question is about policies which have been implemented. We have spoken much about the single child policy in China which has led to rapid upheavals, accompanied by an increasing imbalance of the sex-ratio to the detriment of girls. Do you have any intuitions or observations on the possible consequences of these policies?

Martine Segalen

In France, home schooling was never very common. Two things: parents attach a great importance to the academic results of their children in the context of an economic and moral crisis, and support them as much as they can, and also the relationship with the child has changed greatly. I spoke about Tocqueville’s family democracy, but there exists a true family democracy today: we ask children their opinion. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was signed internationally; children are practically equal to their parents.
Parents have a much more difficult role because they must continue to guide their children without authoritarianism. The rapid changes that we see are also explained by the development of means of communication like the portable telephone, Internet, etc. which destabilize parents. There are real cultural breakdowns that go far beyond the generation gap invoked by Margaret Mead.

As much as the work of Hervé Lebras has always interested me, the work of Emmanuel Todd has irritated me since he puts Brittany, the focus of my studies, into the category of “egalitarian system” without any distinction. Having carried out interviews in this region, I know that there is indeed an egalitarian system, but it functions very differently.

Regarding the consequences of public policies, it is obvious that the decrease in the number of children, economic development, and the fact of women working will completely change the relationships within families, especially in the peri-urban areas. Thank you.

Reading (tamdaoconf.com)

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Before getting into the heart of the subject, I would like to thank Stéphane Lagrée and Bùi Thu Trang for the perfect organization of the fourth “Journées de Tam Dao”, (“JTD”) an event which, over the years, has become a highlight in the calendar of meetings and exchanges between national and international social science specialists. This year’s meeting is characterized by a regional expansion which emphasizes, if it were necessary, the growing interest in Việt Nam and in the region generated by this unique event. I have a special relationship with the “JTD” because I have participated in all its previous meetings either as a speaker in the plenary sessions (2007, 2008) or as a co-organizer of the field workshops, which I will also lead next week for the third year in a row. However, this is the first time that I will attempt the perilous exercise of trying to synthesize the presentations of the last two days. Thank you, Stéphane, for putting your trust in me, even if I am not sure you have made such a good investment!

As a preamble, let’s briefly recall the central problem of this year’s “JTD”. In 1986, the year of the 6th Congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party, the government declared that the country was entering a phase of transition and opening. For more than 20 years now, this transition has been the object of many studies, but the premise for its beginning has never really been questioned. Often, universities consider transition as a given state; they adopt it and adapt it to their discipline and their field of research. The objective of these “JTD” is to give participants and speakers the chance to question the premise itself, to sift through it with a critical filter and deconstruct it in order to evaluate its potential operative value according to different fields of study. I have to say that, since yesterday morning, the work is already well under way. For this synthesis, I will simply describe each presentation chronologically, while highlighting elements and questions that seemed essential to me. Therefore, I will present only some parceled, “real-time” impressions, which are in no way meant to reconstitute the wealth and pertinence of the presentations given.

Let us pause for a moment on the opening speeches.

The vice-president of the VASS, Mr. Nguyễn Xuân Thắng, presented a concept of transition “seen from above”, decreed and somewhat ideological, wherein it is the state that initiates and controls the movement, notably by integrating the country politically and economically into large international institutions (ASEAN, WTO).
Yann Martres was more nuanced in his approach to the notion. As deputy director of the AFD, he set out the classic triptych of conditions necessary for a successful transition to unfold without a hitch: political stability, sustainable development, good governance. But he did not hesitate to revisit the foundations of a concept of transition which could, at first glance, appear to be unilateral and monolithic. Transition can follow different rhythms and be analyzed from various perspectives depending on whether we consider it to be economic or social, whether we are trying to define it in relation to collective or individual phenomena, etc. When Yann Martres pointed out that Việt Nam has gone from being a “poor country” to being a “middle income country,” I thought that this gave economists a concrete and objective indicator for identifying and therefore declaring the end of the transition period. In which case, the country should logically enter into a second phase of transition leading it fairly rapidly from being a “middle income country” to being a “rich” or developed country, if all goes well. The question is whether it is satisfactory to adopt this linear vision of transition based only on the characterization of economic dynamism evaluated on a macro scale, a vision which inevitably standardizes extremely diverse and contrasted realities.

Also, I very much appreciated the view of a “hard science” specialist, Jacques Boulègue, physicist and representative of the IRD, on the concept of transition. He reminded us that in physics, the transition from one state to another is frequently synonymous with imbalance, disorder and instability, a process which could lead to brutal and irreversible changes. Although he prudently avoided establishing a parallel with the properties of economic and social transition, his presentation offered us an original interpretation. Indeed, his reading suggests that any transition dynamic has intrinsic risks and uncertainties that can generate divergence and conflicts which in turn can lead to a final state that is more unstructured, or even chaotic, than its previous state. In other words, it is better to be careful with the positivist approach, given that transition is not automatically associated with the idea of social progress and economic development.

The historical perspective afforded by Nicolas Zufferey on the subject of China was fascinating to me. Philippe Papin carried out the same exercise on the subject of Việt Nam during a conference in Geneva in 2006, in which he pointed out that over a long period of its history, the country had known a succession of transition phases. Thus, in the XVth century, the emperor Lê Thái Tổ, after having liberated Việt Nam from Chinese rule, undertook a profound reform of the country’s administration by imposing a centralized mandarin system over the entire national territory.

In his presentation, Nicolas Zufferey took a look at a very ancient period of transformation of Chinese society which took place before the Christian era, qualified for the occasion as a transition toward a form of modernity, as well as a contemporary transition period which began in China in 1978, and may still be happening.

During his presentation, it seemed to me that this ancient transformation period could be described as isolationist. The Chinese empire transforms itself, but by an internal evolution of its own cultural referents, social and
political: modernization results more from the emergence of divergent and sometimes contradictory currents of thought among Chinese society and especially among its elite, than from the influence and the penetration of external models.

By comparison, the contemporary transition links in with globalization and a homogenization of values, and in this sense it is fed by the adoption of standardized individual and collective behavior, principally in the cultural and economic fields. In other words, the present Chinese and Vietnamese transitions are imposed on all actors, a tidal wave of a hegemonic process encouraged and supported by large international investors who attempt to associate with it the criteria of good government and sustainable development (for appearance’s sake?). Without going so far as to evoke “the end of history”, we could ask if it is still possible for a given country to generate its own modernity without adhering, voluntarily or not, to the model of globalization and standardization of values.

To approach the notion of transition, you have distinguished, on the one hand, an underlying movement implying political (regime) and global cultural changes, and on the other hand, the transformation of economic and social components. In fact, these large underlying movements do not necessarily lead to the simultaneous transformation of the ensemble of components according to a unique rhythm: there can be a time lapse between economic development and cultural or social evolution. I think that a particularly interesting interpretation is the idea of a global movement that does not automatically lead to internal changes, the latter having a certain autonomy (inertia) and the ability to dissociate themselves from the movement of the ensemble.

Finally, you have pointed out that if we consider the concept of transition over an extended period of time, history becomes a story of a transition or many transitions. From this perspective, the agrarian transition started in the Neolithic period and will end with the disappearance of humanity. The underlying question seems essential to me. Are we capable of identifying major changes over long periods of time and then delineating and extracting periods where history accelerates, or evolution radically upends the life and future of a human group? This introspective view of the historian, which questions the notion by asking if the history of humanity is not ultimately that of a never-ending transition, brings us to question the merit and pertinence of this notion and ask what conditions are necessary to render the analysis operative.

Rodolphe De Koninck’s presentation on the agrarian transition fascinated the entire audience: the multi-scale approach placed Việt Nam in the larger context of the entire region of Southeast Asia. And indeed, it is surely in the light of the region’s dynamic that we can better understand the present evolutions in Việt Nam.

You first emphasized the pivotal point consisting of the transfer of the accumulation of agriculture toward industry, which caused a radical upheaval in the relationships of production.

You then painted a broad-stroke picture of the particular features of the agrarian transition in Southeast Asia, features which make it a unique model in the world: the intensification of production systems and
the expansion of agricultural areas were simultaneously imposed with a double process of industrialization and urbanization.

One of the essential aspects of the agrarian transition in Southeast Asia is the ever-growing dependence of agriculture on industry. This dependence is two-fold: upstream from production, for the supply of chemical input (fertilizer, pesticide) and seeds selected for increased productivity, but which must be renewed after almost every harvest; downstream of production, for the use and distribution of the agricultural products through the powerful networks regulated exclusively by capitalist market laws and an unquenchable thirst for profits, networks over which peasants have no control.

This vertical integration, endured rather than experienced by the vast majority of producers, leads to abhorrent and terrifying situations. When you consider that 44% of the national territory is dedicated exclusively to palm oil in Malaysia, we are no longer talking about agriculture, but about industrial agricultural production.

To paraphrase Henri Mendras, is this not an irrefutable sign of “the end of peasantry”, of the programmed disappearance of the peasantry as a human, social and economic network developing specific forms of territorial organization and promotion of the rural environment? Even if there is still land, relegated to the rank of substrata, which contains plants, now industrial monoculture, there is nothing agricultural in such exploitation of resources, nothing rural in these forms of organization of space. Can we resist these powerful agro-industrial models and is there a will to do so? The case of Malaysia is a new demonstration of the existence of an implacable globalization process that standardizes production modes, considerably weakens biodiversity and robs the peasantry of its capacity to control and intervene in its own production systems.

This hyper-specialization of territories reminds us of the political decision of Việt Nam during the collectivization period, to earmark certain regions for monocultures that were considered to be a priority for the self-sufficiency of the country. For example, this was the case in the province now called Phú Thọ, where the hills were first reserved for growing tea, then industrial plantations of eucalyptus in order to feed the paper mill in Bãi Bằng; planning that led to the results we are all aware of today. The irony of the story is that where ideology and directive politics have failed, global demand and market deregulation for speculative means succeed beyond people’s wildest dreams!

The documentary, “À qui appartient la terre?” touched me deeply as it did most of the participants. I think we were all the more exasperated and revolted that the expropriations were carried out in order to build the most futile of developments: a golf course! But what if the peasants had been expropriated in order to build an industrial zone, government housing, a school or a hospital? Isn’t it inevitable that the use of some agricultural land will be transformed because of land development and the decisions made by the Vietnamese government in the framework of its economic diversification and industrialization policies? Nevertheless, I have reservations about an emotional discourse and a symbolic interpretation that ascribes this conflictual situation to the peasants’ visceral attachment to their land and moreover to the land of their ancestors.
It seems to me that the population’s profound discontent is equally (and maybe more) due to the government’s failure to address the legitimate concerns of the peasants, the latter having the impression of being purely and simply dispossessed, if not robbed. In other words, more than expropriation in and of itself, it seems to me that it is the unacceptable level of compensation, the absence of any help to convert or relocate, and the incompetence and cynicism of the local governmental representatives that are the principal sources of tension and conflict.

The economic approach of the DIAL team and Christophe Gironde based on the cross-study of macro and micro analysis shows the value of a procedure that tries to understand the different facets of a single phenomenon which are revealed at different scales of observation. For this synthesis, I wanted to point out two important trends from Christophe Gironde’s presentation: 50% of the rural population is no longer involved in agricultural activity and this trend should continue in the years to come, indicating that in the near future, a minority of Vietnamese will be living directly from agricultural activity. This is a slightly paradoxical situation when we consider that the country has become the second largest exporter of rice and Robusta coffee in the world, and the largest exporter of pepper, etc. This apparent contradiction fits perfectly with the particularities of the agrarian transition in the region, exposed by Rodolphe De Koninck. It also highlights the fact that the country cannot be considered to be a homogenous entity.

Large-scale cash crops like coffee and pepper are principally located in the center of Việt Nam where the limits of cultivation initiated and directed by the government, beginning in 1975, left room for spontaneous movements of colonization which have escaped all administrative control for the last fifteen years. The flow is such that the government has been trying for years to limit the migration from the north to the center of the country, which is causing increasingly serious inter-ethnic tensions between indigenous and migratory populations. For the most part, rice exports come from the Mekong Delta and have been increasing steadily for the last ten years (six million tons last year). This is despite the forced transformation of tens of thousands of acres of rice fields into fish and shrimp farms, which implies that rice production systems are being continually intensified and this compensates for the reduction in rice farming areas. As for the Red River, it is still dominated by a regime of small landowners, which makes the conversion to non-agricultural activity more rapid in the north than in the south since the possible agricultural alternatives are reduced. In the light of these three elements, should we believe that the development and intensification of plantations in the center of the country prefigures an evolution similar, or at least comparable, to that of the Malaysian agro-industrial model?

Studies on the informal sector carried out by the DIAL team bring to light a new central facet of the transition which remains one of the most difficult to understand. First of all, as a neophyte, I logically thought that the informal economy was a transitory stage characteristic of labor market evolution, and that it constituted a sort of intermediate phase between an agricultural economy and a formal industrial economy. However, you have destroyed this preconception by showing that the situation was going to last, that it
was an economic mode in its own right, even though the majority of the actors that you interviewed in the informal market believed that their small production units or services did not have a future, and moreover, that they did not want their children to follow in their footsteps. A new paradox calling our premise into question: if a transition lasts a long time, perhaps the term itself used to characterize the phenomenon is inappropriate.

Regarding the relationships between the government and the informal sector, we can reasonably ask ourselves if small family entrepreneurs would appreciate government intervention given that this would surely mean a right to control their activities (product and service quality, employee conditions), fiscal measures, etc.

The presentation on migrations was particularly interesting for me because it suggested an important change that took place in approximately ten years. The results of my field work on this subject from the 1990s show that the migrants made a clear distinction between “resource space” and “occupied space”. Practically speaking, in the context of migrations that were almost exclusively temporary or reversible, the arrival point was considered as a resource space where the migrant sold his/her labor, but the revenue was invested in their native village, the point of departure. This distinction no longer seems pertinent because now, the majority of households settle or would like to settle in the place to which they have migrated.

Finally, the question of migrations has brought to light important divergences between the results obtained at the macro and micro levels; this supports the argument for bringing together multi-scale and multi-disciplined approaches in order to understand a single phenomenon. On this subject, one of the speakers remarked that “the evolution in progress goes faster than the model,” a reality that requires a constant adjustment of the analysis criteria, such as dividing a country into four distinct zones (urban agglomerations of Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City, peri-urban areas, urban communities, rural communities); according to whether we adopt this zoning or not, the interpretations are significantly different.

Further to Martine Segalen's presentation, we recall that the family institution in Việt Nam historically played, and still plays, an active role in structuring society in rural as well as urban environments. In recent history, meaning the periods of collectivization then renewal – đổi mới –, it acted as a veritable buffer between the government and individuals because it was one of the rare elements of social hierarchy and real solidarity that was not shaken by the succession of changes in ideological direction that had occurred since independence. This capacity to absorb the shocks coming from one’s immediate or more distant environment is both cause and consequence of the cohesion and stability of the elementary familial network that is comprised of the domestic group and which does not recognize any independent individual economic capacity.

It must be pointed out that peasants attribute a meaning that is close to “domestic group”, as it is currently seen in ethnology, to the notion of family (gia đình): economic independence takes precedence over the community of residence, so two or three elementary family units (i.e. conjugal cores) can live together under the same roof if they make up an
autonomous production and consumption unit. Moreover, production and consumption activities are principally carried out by the members of the domestic group who only spend a little time on wider production and consumption activities. Based on this, we can identify three large types of domestic groups in rural areas:

- Nuclear family: the conjugal core made up of parents and children;
- Extended family: the parents of the husband are taken in by the conjugal unit formed by one of the sons;
- The multi-nuclear family: in the context of a kinship system where virilocality prevails, one of the married sons settles permanently in his parents' home; the production and consumption unit is then composed of two nuclear families.

The coexistence of these three types of domestic groups should be seen from a dynamic point of view, putting the domestic group back in the “cycle” of constitution and evolution. We can identify three successive stages corresponding to the most common three residential modalities. Theoretically, during the course of their evolution, all domestic units go through these three states, but in a different order or relationship depending on two principal trajectories: the majority start off with a temporary cohabitation phase (six months to one year) with the parental conjugal core, called “eating separately” because this cohabitation is characterized by the gradual acquisition of an economic autonomy, followed by an independent household; for a minority, they start with a long and stable phase of residential and economic cohabitation with the parental conjugal unit, which does not end until the two parents die.

This second trajectory has greatly evolved since the end of the collectivization period, as a consequence of the evolution of inheritance practices that affect residential arrangements. Practically speaking, we are talking about a shift from inheritance in an agnatic line to inheritance favoring the youngest; according to a process where the sons leave the parental residence as they each get married, the youngest is generally the last to get married. This evolution contradicts the premise that the continuity of the lineage, which is expressed through ancestor-worship and the respect of their tombs, is guaranteed by the simultaneous transmission of status and worship responsibilities and material inheritance, for which the house and land are symbols, in an agnatic line. Also, even if the transmission is an act which in essence demonstrates continuity, the goods transmitted do not seem to be intrinsically invested with any other dimension than that of their usage value. The image of a peasant tied to the land of his/her ancestors is put to the test: this evolution reflects the ongoing quest for an empirical compromise between fairly restrictive social norms and the reality of the daily lives of peasants.

Concerning the Vietnamese policy of limiting births to two children, it was above all adhered to by city dwellers, civil servants and employees in government enterprises because they could risk heavy penalties such as the loss of their job and house. Peasants took more liberties with the law, as the government is more limited in the ways it can exert pressure on them; expropriation and raising taxes are extreme measures that are rarely used and which in any case, were not very effective during the period of collectivization. In the end, birth control
policies in rural areas were not applied with as much rigor as in China, as can be seen in civil records that show many cases of nuclear families with three or four children.

As you have pointed out, the Vietnamese socialist state, very attentive to the equality of the sexes, was proactive in the promotion of women, professionally as well as socially and in the family. In the last fifty years, Vietnamese women have acquired more liberty and power than ever before.

Despite the undeniable gains, we cannot help but notice a marked tendency, which started around ten years ago, towards the privatization of public services, beginning with the two fundamental ones, health and education, in the framework of a policy prudishly named “socialization”. What will be the effects of this gradual disappearance of public policies, which weakens the central position occupied by the family in social and economic networks, especially in the informal sector? In other words, in a context of accrued socio-economic differentiation with increasing inequality between urbanites and rural populations, between Viet and ethnic minorities, etc., isn’t there a risk of splitting up the family institution and, through a chain reaction, destabilizing society as a whole if the social safety net, which guarantees equal or at least equitable access to basic public services, is repealed?

As a conclusion to this slightly disjointed synthesis, I would like to call the attention of the participants to a notion consubstantial with transition. It is the notion of norms, understood to be the ensemble of social, economic, political and cultural rules and values which define the framework (legal, behavioral, hierarchical, spiritual...) within which an organized and recognizable human group develops most of its activities. If we project this universal reality onto the notion of transition, it seems logical that the dimension of change which characterizes and differentiates it from other historical periods, materializes in a series of transgressions and reformulations of these norms that are characteristic of a society in movement. Also, and this seems pertinent for the four workshops, the identification of norms and the reconstitution *a posteriori* of their processes of transformation (abandonment, conflict, transgression, production of new referents) should provide indicators allowing us to approach the nature and extent of the phenomenon named transition.

Thank you for listening.
Part 2
Workshops
2.1. Agrarian Transition

Rodolphe De Koninck – Montreal University, Jim Delaney – University of Toronto, Danielle Labbé – University of British Columbia (UBC), Bruno Thibert – Montreal University, Phạm Văn Cự – ICARGC, Jean-François Rousseau – McGill University

(Re-transcription)

Day 1, Monday, July 19, Morning

Integrated Theoretical Approach to the Agrarian Transition

Danielle Labbé

We will start by introducing the participants because we want them to be at the heart of this workshop. I would like just briefly to talk about the organization of the training session. Today, we will have an introductory session on the agrarian transition, and then, at the end of the day, we will ask you to tell us what information and/or themes you would like to cover and discuss.

Presentation of Teachers and Participants

(cf. biographies of teachers, list of participants at the end of the chapter)

Rodolphe De Koninck

Thank you, everyone, for this presentation. I am a geography professor at the University of Montreal where I also hold the Canada Research Chair in Asian Studies. This twofold status comes after forty years of involvement in research and teaching on Southeast Asia.

I studied for my Ph.D. at the University of Singapore from 1967 to 1970, and since then I never really left this region of the world. My doctorate thesis was on the market gardening suburbs of Singapore. At the time, I was confronted with people living below the poverty level, but also with Chinese gardeners who did very well for themselves back then. The question of poverty has always been at the center of my preoccupations. The first project I directed, at the beginning of the 1970s, was a comparative study on the impact of the green revolution in Malaysia and Indonesia, in 64 villages.

[5] Names in square brackets are those of the trainers.
I am presenting this overview in order briefly to explain why we are discussing the agrarian transition in the framework of this workshop.

The research started in this region led my students and I to look into a series of problems, particularly those related with what I call the "problem of the forest": how are forests managed and transformed into farmland? I will explain later why we now call this the agrarian transition. What is happening to the forests of Southeast Asia, and why have they disappeared so quickly, in the space of thirty or forty years?

In 2003, several researchers and academics met in order to share our thoughts and our research intentions. The debate centered on questions such as: how is the transformation in Southeast Asia specific to the region? How can this transformation be understood in the light of what we know about the agrarian transition and the substantial body of literature concerning transformation of societies? What are the mechanisms at work when a society shifts from agricultural to urban? And what problems result from this transition?

The ChATSEA project, The Challenges of the Agrarian Transition in Southeast Asia, has been mentioned several times over the last few days, and we will have the opportunity to return to this subject as we will borrow some definitions from it. What is the agrarian transition? How does the transformation of the region's countries subscribe, or not, to the theories of agrarian transition? Are these useful or not? In the light of what is happening in Southeast Asia, how can we contribute to the theory of agrarian transition?

During the round table discussion, you spoke about poverty reduction – how can the agrarian transition contribute to this reduction, and in what ways does it not do so? You have also spoken about the important question of the role of the State. I remind you that on a historical scale, during the transformation of European agricultural society into industrial society, the role of the State was not at all comparable to what it is today. No one mentioned globalization, which is surprising. I point out that the phenomenon is certainly not new, but its intensity is obvious. We will also debate the role of globalization, and the perspective that we must take in order to study the agrarian transition when we face the intensity of the globalization process in which we are all implicated. Many of you also mentioned the question of land. I point out that the first definitions of the agrarian transition, the one put forth by Marx in particular, dealt primarily with land ownership. The definition of the agrarian transition is very much linked to this first definition, which sometimes leads to confusion, notably with translations into Vietnamese of the terms "agrarian transition" and "land transition".

Yves Perraudeau

I would like to make a comment on the notion of time and the acceleration of processes. For economists, it is important to bring this in, time is often an active factor. I remind you simply of the notion of interest rates. Time is fundamental; I refer to the work of Thierry Godin on the metamorphosis of the future. Thierry Godin is working on the prospect of France in 2050; his work shows how the unit of time shrinks.

In general, from Antiquity to the time of Charlemagne, the unit of time was the day. We lived by the rising and setting of the sun, work or travel time was calculated
in days, thus the notion of “daily work”, of jobs given by the day. Then, afterward, with the discovery of the hour, the rhythm was dictated by churches that would divide up the day into different periods with breaks in between, including in the fields. Drawings and paintings from the 18th and 19th centuries show this time dictated by church bells. In the 19th century and above all last century, the reference was the clock, with the scientific organization of work; with Taylor, the reference became the second. Since the 1970s-1980s, the reference point has by and large been an electronic pulse, the reaction time for computers.

This acceleration of time, as often mentioned by Rodolphe De Koninck, must be taken into consideration in transitions and in the process of transition. This seems essential to me.

[Rodolphe De Koninck]

I will now review the great debates on the agrarian transition, by using what you have said this morning during the presentations. This brings me back to my plenary presentation and to the principal processes that we study in the ChATSEA project and to the “windows of observation” we use. We will therefore talk about the characteristics of the agrarian transition, which I call the processes, and then we will address the methods for understanding it, taking into account your fields of interest. I have grouped these using various terms: poverty, land, role of the State, urbanization and peri-urbanization, specificity (rapidity and pace of change), work methods.

Our team had prepared some priority subjects. But we will try to adapt our approach to the questions that you have identified as priorities.

Today, I will speak for much of the time. I will be the one to try and address these questions in more detail.

What is poverty, and above all why is there poverty? The great agrarian transition theorists, those who were the first to identify this concept and to speak of agrarian transition, Karl Marx, Karl Kautsky and Alexandre Chayanov – whose works are widely referenced in the Journal of Peasant Studies, – have asked themselves this question. I will therefore try briefly to summarize the essence of the agrarian transition theory in Marxist literature. There is a very close link between the theory of social classes and the theory of agrarian transition. The essential questions brought up by Marx, and those alongside him, were: why are there inequalities? why are there rich and poor? how do the rich become rich?

In simple terms, according to Marxist political economy, the source of wealth in a pre-capitalist system lies in capturing surplus; while in a capitalist system the source of wealth relies on capturing value, also known as surplus value. In pre-modern or feudal societies, surplus was visible: it involved agricultural production in the countryside. Peasants had to hand over a large proportion of their harvest to the landlord of the land they cultivated. Thus, for example, the peasant who produced two tons of rice had to pay one or one and a half tons to the landowner. This is what we call the appropriation of surplus. This was a system where the relations of production were first and foremost agricultural. How is it that in this type of society, this appropriation was accepted by the population? It was clearly through coercion, even violence, but also through the construction of an ideological device, a discursive justification through the
social discourse of the lord, the land owner: his reaping of taxes was by right. Obviously, in almost all societies that have gone through this mode of production, religion played a determining role in justifying the difference between the rich and the poor.

So-called capitalist society is characterized by a fundamentally different mode of accumulation. The mode of appropriation is evident enough but the mode of accumulation has become invisible. Take a simple example that we all know: the relations of production that characterize capitalist society, between those who own the means of production and the workers who only have, in the language of Marx, their labor to sell.

Let’s take the example of a shoe factory. Its owner cannot greatly influence his production costs – except the wages he pays his workers, in this case 30 workers who produce 900 pairs of shoes per day, or 30 pairs per worker. Each pair is sold for 100 dollars, which signifies a daily production per worker valued at $3,000 and a total daily production valued at $90,000.

Let’s say that the owner pays each worker 100 dollars per day, which means total daily outgoings of $3000. But the factory owner has many other expenses to cover: raw materials (particularly leather), land rent, buildings, machinery, energy, wages of additional (including administrative) employees, capital investment, etc. The total for these other daily expenses comes to $80,000. The resulting equation is: 90,000 dollars of gross revenue, minus $83,000 [3,000 + 80,000] in production costs. On a daily basis, the factory owner can therefore reap a profit of $7,000, the so-called surplus value, which in this case is invisible to those responsible for it, the factory workers.

In pre-capitalist agriculture, the surplus that the landowner accumulates and that allows him to build a castle and to hire staff, notably soldiers, is visible. Those who are subjected to taxes see what happens but are compelled to accept it for ideological reasons, and also because they are threatened with physical violence if they revolt. In the capitalist system, what Marx calls the extortion of the surplus-value is invisible. Historically, the question of agrarian transition is: how does a society go from a system where the extortion and the appropriation are visible to a system where they are invisible?

We started on the theme of poverty, and then moved on to inequality. How can we reduce the poverty that is characteristic of agrarian societies, where an enormous divide exists between a class of very rich people and a majority of poor people, moving to a society where the place and the mode of surplus appropriation are primarily urban and industrial? In the transition from the agricultural and rural mode of production to an industrial and urban mode of production, the role of the State and the question of land are fundamental.

The principal source of wealth for the great feudal landowners is land ownership. Historically and in the interpretation of the agrarian transition, particularly in the European and initially English context, one stage is particularly important: the “enclosure movement”. It is an English term, but we use it also in French: the fencing of communal pastures or communal land in England starting in the 16th century. So what characterizes European feudal society – but this also existed in many Asian societies – is that, in addition to large private domains, the lords also controlled communal land.
This was often forest land on which the poor peasants, who had to pay, let’s say, half of their agricultural production to the landlord, could look for wood for heating or cooking, could hunt or even let their livestock graze. The enclosures characterized a process according to which the great landlords decided to take possession of the communal land and forests and fence them off: “It’s over; you can no longer come onto this land! From now on, we will use it ourselves!” On these communal lands, the lords, particularly in England, would mostly raise sheep for wool production. Why sheep and wool? At the time wool was becoming increasingly important; thanks to the new textile industries gradually establishing themselves in the cities, the raw material could be transformed in a more efficient way for the clothes manufacturing industry. The wool obtained could be sold in the cities to the growing numbers of factories which were often owned by the same landowners. Who worked in these factories? Often peasants who had been ruined by the fencing of the communal pastures. These pastures were in fact indispensable to the survival of the peasants. They had very little revenue and were very poor since they gave at least half of their harvest to the landowners. As already mentioned, communal lands represented a reserve for wood, small game and grazing opportunities for what few sheep, cows or goats the peasants may have had. The peasants were therefore increasingly forced to go and work in the cities, in the wool textile factories.

It must be understood that the agrarian transition is a long historical process, involving innovation, social transformation and new legislation. The legislation that finally enshrined the practice of “enclosures” in England was passed as late as the 19th century. It brought about an acceleration of the transformation of the wool industry which became the driver of the industrial revolution at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century in England. After wool, it was cotton’s turn.

Increasingly close ties were established between the city and the countryside, where the use of land itself evolved rapidly, while accumulation was increasingly achieved in the urban world. The implications are phenomenal! I will not mention all of them now, but I would like to go back to cotton for a moment. The scale of accumulation based on sheep rearing, practiced on additional land requisitioned by large farm owners, who gradually became the industrial middle class, greatly expanded with the colonial period, particularly during the 19th century: from then on the dominant raw material for the textile industry was cotton. However cotton does not grow in England nor in France nor anywhere else in Europe; it can only be cultivated in intermediate climates, more or less of the Mediterranean type, as in Egypt, India or in America, notably in the lower Mississippi valley. At the time that accumulation became more and more global, cotton from the colonies would be used in European factories in England, France, Portugal or Spain. I remind you that the United States was a British colony, and that the cotton industry became an

enormous business in the Mississippi valley, north India and the Nile valley.

Two elements then became crucial: the role of the State and the double process of urbanization and industrialization. It was in the cities that the transformation of raw materials first occurred. Urbanization and the concentration of populations in the cities brought new problems: housing, urban development, health, etc. At the beginning, the State intervened very little; management was in the hands of capitalists: there was much poverty, workers were paid very little, and they worked up to twelve hours per day. In addition, the colonies became an essential element of the transformation in Europe; they were the source of raw materials – cotton, later on rubber for the automobile, etc. –, and provided market opportunities for exports. Indeed, European textiles, and in particular English textiles, were largely exported to cotton producing countries.

I underline the dynamic link that was created between the countryside and the cities. Through migrations, the former supplied the latter with a good part of the labor force, as well as raw materials. Gradually, the scale of the phenomenon became global. Above all, there is a direct link between the creation of wealth and the creation of poverty on a world scale.

Let’s take a concrete example. Cotton was produced in British colonies: Egypt, the United States and India. Remember that, in the case of India, in particular in Bengal, the traditional textile industry had been very prosperous before the colonial period. When the British cotton textile production industry became increasingly productive – improvement of machines, growth in cotton imports –, the European markets could not absorb all of the fabric produced. The surplus was then exported, especially to India, which had a high population. How could textiles be exported to a country where textiles were being produced at a cheaper price? By enforcing the purchase of foreign textiles, while destroying the local textile industry. It is a very important episode in colonial history to remember. In the context of the development of European industrial prosperity, violence was used to damage production as well as people: in Calcutta, the colonial masters ordered the mutilation of local weavers by having their index finger amputated. The Indian textile industry was thus destroyed, through both economic methods – dumping – and violence: not only were the weaving looms destroyed, but thousands of weavers were mutilated in the large cities.

We must understand that, in the history of the agrarian transition, whether in Europe or in Japan starting at the end of the 19th century, access to global markets – whatever it took – became essential.
In making links between the fundamental processes of the agrarian transition, which for the purposes of our research is the intensification and the expansion of agriculture, I remind you that the elements previously mentioned concerning the transformation of the English countryside – such as intensive sheep farming – represent a form of agricultural intensification. As for expansion, its history is also associated with colonial history, with the opening of new farm areas in order to produce raw materials such as cotton. We could also mention coffee and cocoa, grown in tropical countries but largely exported to industrialized countries, where most of the coffee and chocolate is processed into finished products; much like rubber, which is cultivated in several Southeast Asian countries. During the colonial period, this was exemplified by the Michelin plantations in Cochinchina, which exported to the French automobile industry.

We will see, from a very contemporary point of view, the importance of this double phenomenon of intensification and expansion. We will also examine each of the processes mentioned in this graph, which are linked to what I just presented: urbanization, industrialization, market integration, in other words, processing of agricultural products.
for the market. Production is no longer simply for food; even food production is increasingly conditioned by market mechanisms. This agrarian evolution also implies population displacement, migrations: from the countryside to the cities, but also international migrations, with new farmland and centers for industrial and urban development being created. Throughout history, and even more so today, new forms of agricultural or industrial production associated with the agrarian transition have required regulations. For example, industrial production must abide by a certain number of standards requiring that farm production does not destroy the natural environment – at least not totally. Agricultural intensification more and more systematically depends on fertilizer, insecticides and pesticides, while agricultural expansion generally brings about deforestation. Urbanization and industrialization depend increasingly on raw materials and energy, and so does agriculture. This has obvious consequences for the destruction of nature, as Marx had already pointed out in his criticism of industrial development. In Southeast Asia, urban and agricultural development pose considerable problems in terms of water management, transportation flows and energy production.

Day 1 - Monday, July 19, Afternoon

[Rodolphe De Koninck]

I would like to summarize in simple, even basic terms what I already presented on the agrarian transition. I would also like to add that I have in the past offered a forty-five hour course on the agrarian transition, while this morning’s presentation only lasted one hour! So there are many examples and above all many nuances that could not be mentioned. Since this morning, I spoke with one of you and it seems important to revisit certain elements of my presentation.

I remind you that the industrialization of textile production started with wool then turned to cotton. Why cotton? Cotton thread can be weaved much more rapidly, it is stronger and breaks less; by using cotton, more clothing can be produced, more efficiently. Today, cotton is infinitely more important than wool. The problem is that this plant does not grow in temperate climates: it cannot be grown in England, France, and Germany or in Europe in general. Cotton is a crop of inter-tropical countries; it grows in warm regions that have a true dry season: Central Asia, northern India, lower Nile Valley, south-central United States. Cotton is also produced in China (today’s largest world producer), Pakistan and Brazil, etc. Demand for cotton grew when it was discovered that this material could be woven more efficiently than wool. In the 17th century, the English settled in India, and progressively took control. Intensification and expansion of this crop were favored in the colonies, including latterly in colonial India under British control. The production of cotton fabric by a growing British industry found itself in competition, via international markets, with local Indian craft production.

Remember the fundamental principal that agriculture gradually gives way to industry as the principal source of accumulation. In all the forms of agrarian transition, there is a so-called class relationship that characterizes the mode of production. In feudal times, the dominant relationship was established between the landlord and the peasants; in the capitalist mode, which was the
production mode that followed almost everywhere, the principal relationship was between the capitalists and the proletariat or, if you prefer, the workers. This is the model. I would add that agrarian transition theorists have all predicted that this model would evolve towards “large-scale capitalist agriculture”, and that small production units would disappear. In other words, that agriculture would be made up only of large units and large properties, and would rely on collective labor. Based on this idea, one of the greatest errors in history was committed: communism tried to apply the principle of collective farming. And what was the principal source of economic failure in all the communist regimes? Whether it was the Soviet, Chinese, or Vietnamese regimes, collective agriculture never succeeded in attaining productivity or ensuring growth comparable to that attained in many so-called capitalist countries, including Việt Nam since the reform of 1986 and the de-collectivism of agriculture. This failure is attributable to the very nature of work and to the principle according to which, in agriculture, collective work is never as productive as individual work (there would be much more to say on this question). Another example is Cuban agriculture, which was never very productive.

The question of the role of agriculture in the agrarian transition brings us to the specificity of Southeast Asia. Does the agrarian transition in Southeast Asia display these main features: accumulation increasingly toward and in the cities, transfer of population, and essential role of the State? What is the specific nature of the agrarian transition and its consequences in Southeast Asia? These questions bring us to the ChATSEA project and the processes that we mentioned earlier.

But I would like to pause for a moment on the “windows of observation” – globalization, actors, living conditions, and territoriality.

Let’s ask a concrete question: what part does globalization play in agricultural expansion and intensification in Southeast Asia? This involves examining the characteristic process of agrarian transition, already mentioned, from the point of view of globalization: agricultural intensification and expansion, urbanization and industrialization, market integration, migrations, regulation, environmental transformation. This also acts as a form of methodological structuring. How can we study processes from the point of view of globalization? What is the link, for example, between globalization and regulation? Take the example of Việt Nam investing more and more in production for the global market, notably in aquaculture, or fish farming. This activity has become an important source of exports, but to take part in it Vietnamese producers are required to abide by the regulations, i.e. submit to a set of environmental and health rules, etc. If they do not, the United States, the main importer of Vietnamese production, will stop buying their products. Obviously, regulations also apply to industrial production. The “scene” of agrarian transition also involves non-governmental actors that are not directly involved, those that we call stakeholders, in particular non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

By bringing together these six processes and four windows, including that of actors, this analytical device proves to be very rich and allows us to observe several of the dynamics of the agrarian transition. In the case of the ChATSEA project, we gave priority to longitudinal or diachronic studies of villages, meaning over a long
period of time. We generally used this method, and several of our researchers, including myself, have returned to the villages that we had studied twenty or thirty years ago. It is also the process presented in the plenary session by Christophe Gironde, who returned to his research field after about ten years, and took a comparative approach to the changes in land ownership, level of employment, and migrations.

This morning, we spoke about the problems of poverty. Why is it that people who produce food are poor? Why are people in Africa poor, and why do they not have enough to eat even though they are farmers themselves? It is because of living conditions – livelihood. This point of view can be examined in the context of a longitudinal study: how have subsistence conditions evolved in given villages? Actors of change in every village community include not only villagers, with a range of strategies – to pursue farming or not, work in the city, emigrate –, but also the State. In Việt Nam, in particular, the State’s role is considerable. It intervenes indirectly through its policies, the aid it provides, training, education, infrastructure, etc. The State is a major actor, but it is not alone: there are also private actors, companies, including multinationals. Globalization thus plays a determining role in the transformations occurring in all Southeast Asian rural communities.

Village coffee producers in the Highlands of Việt Nam, in Dăk Lάk province for example, provide a very concrete example. In this region, the producers’ fortune or misfortune is directly linked to the price of coffee on the global market. The Vietnamese government, like Vietnamese peasants, can do nothing. The prices are set on the coffee Exchange Board in San Paulo, Brazil!

Spatiality must be taken into account, as change in scale is fundamental. Let me return to my example in the Highlands of Việt Nam. We must take into account the price of coffee, but also the actors involved: the producers, the ethnic minorities (that have in general been displaced and who often work for small Kinh planters), the State and its policies. An analysis that only considers what happens in the village, as anthropologists often do, is excellent, but in the end, it is also necessary to keep in mind what happens on a much larger scale: relationships between communities, relationships with the cities, migration, displacement of population, infrastructures. Spatial elements, territoriality, are plural and must be taken into consideration, necessitating what is termed in geography a “multi-scale” analysis. Thus, when we examine a village from above, we see that it seems to be well organized, with a well positioned temple, a waterway along which the houses are located. If we examine aerial photographs, we see that all the villages are along the same waterway, that a specific spatial organization illustrates how the coffee that is produced is brought to market. At an even broader scale, on satellite images showing a large portion of Việt Nam’s Central Highlands, one can perceive how coffee cultivation has spread at the expense of the forest, that ethnic minority villages have been displaced, etc.

We could multiply examples of how these processes join together, and angles of analysis allowing observation and interpretation of a considerable number of elements of the agrarian transition. Are the processes and windows of observation mentioned easily comprehensible to you? We could start a
debate. According to you, is there anything missing? Can ethnicity be defined as a window of observation?

[Danielle Labbé]

As a Ph.D. student myself, I have some questions in relation to the model that ChATSEA used. If we take the case of Việt Nam, which seems to be a good example, I think that we must ask where the role of the State starts and ends. The old cooperatives have been semi-privatized; are these now part of the State or do we mean only central government? Are research institutes under the tutelage of the government included in the State? What about the old State enterprises that are now privatized but that have kept very close ties with the State? Also, the word “culture” was never mentioned. Are the current transformations the result of processes that are applicable everywhere, independently of local cultures?

[Jean-François Rousseau]

The issues that we are addressing are often seen as projects of capitalist expansion influenced by globalization. Could modernization have been a window in the same way as globalization? To what extent can we distinguish between these two concepts?

[Danielle Labbé]

Identifying the actors appears to be a problem. Can we name the agents of change by sticking only to State actors? For example, let’s examine the question of land. Are land laws at the heart of the dynamic or do local practices enter into it?

[Didier Orange]

I have a question on method and another on the world of agriculture. Does this method allow the separation of the role of the State from individual decisions? Are social networks included in the conceptual window of actors? We have spoken a great deal about poverty in the agricultural world, but what about urban poverty? Finally, you said that collective work, especially in agriculture, is not very effective; can we say the same about other sectors of activity?

The themes are written on the board: modernization; State, individual decision; culture; social network; actors; urban poverty; collective work, effectiveness (sectors).

[Rodolphe De Koninck]

In the context of the ChATSEA project, researchers and students define social networks as actors. The question of rural/urban poverty makes me realize that we should be conscious that, for analytical purposes, we talk of the city “opposed to” the countryside, and likewise the State opposed to individuals, agriculture opposed to industry. These analytical dichotomies sometimes fail to represent reality, as there can be continuums. If we take the example of city/country, in Việt Nam or in Java, where the situation is even more striking, the city doesn’t stop, the country doesn’t start; the aggregation of rural and urban is particularly marked. That being said, you are right to ask the question. Urban poverty exists and it is being studied. I remind you that for analytical and didactic reasons, I am addressing the preoccupations that many among you have mentioned this morning concerning
poverty and the role of the State in poverty reduction. The creation of wealth creates poverty especially through the appropriation of surplus.

At what level do we speak about the State? Of course there is a Vietnamese government, policies put into place, but their implementation, much like the local repercussions of the policies, decisions and investments involve individuals, contradictions and decisions. Individuals will use the decisions of the State for their own profit, so we speak then of corruption. Do they represent the State in this context?

The term “modernization” is a very vague one that can designate agrarian transition as well as development or urbanization. I try to avoid using it. How do we define modernization? I admit that I find it more difficult to define this term than agrarian transition.

You have mentioned the role of culture whereas myself, I mentioned the question of ethnicity. Of course, there are specific Vietnamese characteristics which are sometimes significant. Nevertheless I believe we should avoid the universal trap of saying “the Vietnamese are not like the Lao, or the Khmers” or “the French are not like the Germans or the English”. We should be wary of cultural or environmental determinism.

There is one more important point: the question of collective work. I will try to summarize this. I took the three most important examples: Russia, China and Việt Nam. I stated that the principal driver of the economic failure of these so-called communist revolutions was agriculture, because of its incapacity to render collective work as productive as individual work. Work is at the center of the organization of society and appropriation. When we spoke about surplus, and surplus-value, it was of course in relation to the appropriated fruit of labor. The so-called communist revolutions are characterized by the quest for the collectivization of labor, in industrial as well as agricultural production. Many analysts have shown that the collectivization of work in industry is inspired by Fordism or Taylorism, that was practiced in capitalist industry, namely on automobile assembly lines. The industrial assembly line is equally effective in a capitalist or socialist economy, as long as it is properly launched technically. Think about Soviet military industry versus the American military industry during the arms race. You could say perhaps: “But the Lada was not as well made as the Buick!” The reason was simple. For the Soviets, arms production was a priority and they succeeded just as well as on the capitalist industrial assembly lines. The production of major pieces of equipment, e.g. turbines, or the manufacturing of steel was just as effective in the communist system. Why? Because the alienation of labor, whether under the tutelage of capitalism or the State, remains the same. The workers’ relation to work in a Ford or General Electric factory in Boulogne-Billancourt or in Detroit is the same as that of a worker who is working in Rostov in Russia on an industrial assembly line. That the owner is John Ford or the State, or in the communist lingo “the workers”, the process of work is expropriated in the same way. The worker on the assembly line does his job, and he doesn’t have the choice of performing better or worse than his neighbor because everything is conditioned by the procedures and the rhythm of automated work.

In agriculture, the process of work takes place over three dimensions, not two. In a factory, it happens in a precise place; in
agriculture, it involves space, territory. Let's characterize somewhat the great socialist agriculture. When work is collectivized, we say for example, “Here are one thousand hectares of wheat, and you are two hundred workers. You will work the fields today and you will produce that great socialist harvest, then at the end of the day you will receive your part of the yield.” History shows that yields fell in all the great collectivized agricultural systems, whether they were the kolkhozy, the sovkhozy, the people’s communes in China or even the cooperatives in Việt Nam. Yields were inferior to those that existed before collectivization and above all they were greatly inferior to those obtained in capitalist agriculture or in the countries with so-called market economies. What is the reason for this? Autonomy of work can be totally ironed out in industrial work; on the assembly line, the factory manager can supervise and ensure that the workers all perform at the same rhythm. Surveillance of those working in the fields, three kilometers from the work station, is impossible; moreover what reasons are there for intensive individual investment in labor? Take one thousand workers on one thousand hectares, whatever the production, the portion will be one thousandth. On the other hand, a peasant who works on his own farm plot – as Marx points out, the peasant is the most ego-centric person in the world – wants to get as much as possible in return. History gives concrete examples that the repeated failures and setbacks of the USSR and China first took place in agriculture. The same goes for the failure of the Vietnamese economy, except that the Vietnamese were somehow quicker to understand. I remind you that the USSR became extremely dependent on agricultural imports and all attempts to accelerate large-scale agricultural production ended in failure. We cannot alienate, mechanize, robotize, expropriate farm work in the same way that we can with industrial work. One of the essential consequences in the history of humanity was therefore the restoration of individual land ownership. I add that this restoration is not necessarily a panacea; capitalism found other ways to take total control of agriculture and farmers. But that is another debate that we cannot have here.

I add that we must not, however, confuse collective work and community work – the tradition of community work in Southeast Asian societies (especially in Việt Nam) in so-called agrarian societies where several farming tasks, in the rice fields for example, are performed collectively. For example, peasants harvest together and share many tasks. Agreements do not involve the State, but are made between families or within the village community. But this has little to do with collectivization.

Savath Souksakhone

I have understood that notion of agrarian transition has a very broad meaning that is accompanied by specific processes. Can we evaluate a process of agrarian transition?

[Rodolphe De Koninck]

The question can be asked differently. Can urbanization and industrialization be good or bad? Can agricultural expansion and intensification be good or bad? In the context of Southeast Asia for example, it is more pertinent to identify the foundations and the consequences of the intensification of agriculture and its territorial expansion.
I hope that you understand the logic that I am establishing here. We have identified the characteristic processes of the agrarian transition and we are trying to examine how, in the context of Southeast Asia, they function.

The participants get organized into four groups and define the points that they wish to see covered in more detail, the issues to address and questions to ask.

Nguyễn Thị Hà Nhุง

The presentation on the analysis of the agrarian transition through “windows of observation” was very clear. Can we talk about the reciprocal link between poverty and agrarian transition?

[Rodolphe De Koninck]

Poverty is not at the origin of the agrarian transition, but let’s agree that poverty is a state that the agrarian transition, theoretically at least, can help to resolve. Your question was: “Doesn’t the agrarian transition, in fact, accentuate or create new forms of poverty?” Excellent question, we will talk about this in detail tomorrow.

Nguyễn Thị Hà Nhุง

Among the six processes of the agrarian transition, you have talked about intensification and expansion of the area of farmland. In Việt Nam, we observe the reverse phenomenon: the shrinking of farmland for other uses. How can we interpret this phenomenon? In some countries like Thailand or China, we notice a return to traditional agriculture. The peasants refuse to use insecticides and chemical fertilizers in favor of organic products for a fairly limited market. How can we link this phenomenon to the windows that you have presented? My last question is on the transfer of ownership of farmland. It is divided among the State, communities and individuals. Could you discuss the fundamental theories on this point, and current trends, taking concrete examples in the Southeast Asian region?

[Rodolphe De Koninck]

Concerning the land question, there is a trend toward privatization but also sometimes towards keeping the State as owner. I would add that we can increasingly include multinationals among landowners. In Việt Nam, the problem does not yet exist, but elsewhere there are large landowners such as Malaysian consortiums taking control of very large areas of farmland, especially in Indonesia. For some time, these same multinational companies have also been acquiring land in Cambodia, in order to grow crops in the eastern part of the country.

Đặng Thị Thanh Thảo

We would like to have more details on the link between the four components of the “windows of observation”. The globalization process has a very strong impact on the transition in general, and also on the agrarian transition; could you develop this last point?

[Rodolphe De Koninck]

The two questions intersect, but it is good to ask them because confusion is entirely possible – it even exists in my own mind, between the six processes and the four windows, in particular that of globalization.

Hoàng Thị Hà

Where does urbanization and industrialization fit into the agrarian transition? What are
the changes in terms of employment for the peasants during a process of agrarian transition?

Than Thanaren

What are the new problems created by the agrarian transition?

Didier Orange

How can the new relationship between the industrial and agricultural worlds – we talk about large-scale industrial farming, represent a crisis in the agrarian transition?

[Rodolphe De Koninck]

It is a good question because we have a tendency mostly by default to talk about agrarian transition as a linear process, whereas there are exchanges back and forth. There are dialectical processes within the agrarian transition. Aren't there also agricultural contradictions even within the agrarian transition? We will address these issues tomorrow morning and during the entire week, as we keep in mind all of your questions.

Danielle Labbé wrote on the board the questions asked by each group: agrarian transition and questions linked to poverty; shrinkage of cultivated areas and modification of land use; return to more traditional (organic) agriculture; theories, trends and examples of transfer of land ownership; links between the four “windows of observation” and the agrarian transition (example of globalization); the place and role of urbanization; impacts in terms of employment for peasants; crises and new problems linked to the agrarian transition; is the agrarian transition a linear process?

Day 2, Morning of Tuesday, July 20

Rodolphe De Koninck had to leave the training workshop on the second day to go to Canada.

[Danielle Labbé]

Due to the sudden departure of Rodolphe De Koninck, we have made a few adjustments to our schedule. This morning, we will look at urbanization and then, this afternoon, we will talk about what geographical information systems can bring to the debate.

2.1.2. The Challenges of Research on the Urban Transition in Southeast Asia

We will answer the questions noted yesterday during the week's presentations. For my part, I will address the question of urbanization in Southeast Asia, but also in developed countries and within the development process in general. How do we define “urban, urban center, urban population, urban activities, urban lifestyle”? How do we define a town?

Chữ Đình Phúc

A town is an agglomeration in which the inhabitants make a living essentially from non-agricultural activities.

Didier Orange

It is a concentration of inhabitants and an administrative center.
Savath Souksakhone

In Laos, the first criterion is the number of inhabitants, from two to three thousand inhabitants. The second criterion is the type of professional activities: 50% non-agricultural activities. The third criterion is the density of the population: 200 inhabitants per km².

Nguyễn Thị Hà Nhúng

In Việt Nam, the definition is based on the number of inhabitants and the administrative functions.

Quách Thị Thu Cúc

Shouldn’t we add infrastructure and water distribution systems? Schools, hospitals?

Danielle Labbé

Urban populations and the number of cities in the world are increasing. However, international comparisons are based on very loose definitions. Countries define their populations in order to produce their own national statistics; some according to the urban population within certain administrative limits – municipality, county or village; other countries establish urban classifications based on the size and/or density of the population. The line between urban and rural is defined nationally; it results from cultural viewpoint.

This causes problems for comparisons. In Benin, a locality with ten thousand or more inhabitants is automatically classified as urban. All localities that have fewer than ten thousand people are rural. In Angola, Argentina and Ethiopia, all localities with more than two thousand people are classified as urban. Other countries use more complicated definitions compounding size, population density and socio-economic indicators. In Botswana, an agglomeration of

Figure 16 Estimated and Projected Rural and Urban World Populations for 1950-2030 (in millions)

five thousand people or more, where 75% of the economic activities are non-agricultural, is classified as urban. People speak about cities, localities, capitals, projects, urban zones and metropolitan areas. There are a number of terms used to identify the city that can differ from statistical definitions. Benin and Angola both have a rate of urbanization of 20% and an urban population of about 50%, but the situations are very different in each of these countries. Central Jakarta in Indonesia is estimated at 8.7 million people, but the metropolitan region encompasses 24 million people; the urbanized corridor of 200 km between Jakarta and Johor is home to 37 million people.

We must pay attention to the changes in definitions in certain countries. China is a good example to illustrate this. In the beginning of the 1980s, statistics indicated a massive increase in the number of cities and urban population growth. The city of Zibo in Shandong province had 2.4 million residents in 1987, and 66% of the active population worked mainly in agriculture. The same observation can be made in Hà Nội as a result of the extension of the city in 2008 and the absorption of the neighboring province of Hà Tây, and of districts of Vinh Phúc and Hòa Bình. The city now covers a territory of 3000 km² and has a population of 6.2 million inhabitants. The opposite can happen: in India, the majority of the rural population lives in villages of 1000 to 5000 inhabitants. Using certain definitions, the majority of India would be urban.

Didier Orange
I have worked in the agricultural sphere for 20 years and I am always careful in using the
terms “agricultural world” and “rural world.” In fact, someone can work in the agricultural world and live in the city; the rural world is also defined by cities.

Danielle Labbé

I think that the city/country and urban/rural distinctions are analytical and cultural. They are conceptual categories.

| Table 13 Rural and Urban World Populations, 1950-2030 |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Region                          | Mid-year population (millions) | Growth rate (%) |
| Urban                           |           |           |           |           |           |           |         |
| Total                           | 754       | 1,543     | 2,862     | 4,981     | 2.9       | 2.4       | 1.8     |
| High-income countries           | 359       | 562       | 697       | 825       | 1.8       | 0.9       | 0.6     |
| Middle and low income           | 392       | 981       | 2,165     | 4,156     | 3.7       | 3.2       | 2.2     |
| Europe                          | 287       | 455       | 534       | 540       | 1.8       | 0.6       | 0.4     |
| Latin America and the Caribbean| 70        | 198       | 391       | 608       | 4.2       | 2.7       | 1.5     |
| Northern America                | 110       | 180       | 243       | 335       | 2.0       | 1.2       | 1.0     |
| East Asia and Pacific           | 103       | 258       | 703       | 1,258     | 3.7       | 4.0       | 2.2     |
| East Asia and Pacific without China | 33       | 96        | 246       | 474       | 4.3       | 3.8       | 2.2     |
| South Asia                      | 72        | 164       | 372       | 849       | 3.3       | 3.3       | 2.7     |
| Central Asia                    | 14        | 40        | 77        | 118       | 4.3       | 2.6       | 1.4     |
| Middle East and North Africa    | 22        | 70        | 177       | 360       | 4.6       | 3.7       | 2.3     |
| Sub-Saharan Africa              | 20        | 67        | 219       | 648       | 4.9       | 4.7       | 3.6     |

Rural

Total                           | 1,769     | 2,523     | 3,195     | 3,289     | 1.4       | 0.9       | 0.1     |
| High-income countries           | 219       | 187       | 184       | 139       | -0.6      | -0.07     | -0.9    |
| Middle and low income           | 1,550     | 2,336     | 3,011     | 3,151     | 1.6       | 1.0       | 0.2     |
| Europe                          | 261       | 221       | 193       | 131       | -0.7      | -0.5      | -1.3    |
| Latin America and the Caribbean| 97        | 124       | 127       | 116       | 1.0       | 0.1       | -0.3    |
| Northern America                | 62        | 64        | 71        | 61        | 0.1       | 0.4       | -0.5    |
| East Asia and Pacific           | 639       | 1,006     | 1,113     | 870       | 1.8       | 0.4       | -0.8    |
| East Asia and Pacific without China | 153     | 242       | 294       | 268       | 1.8       | 0.8       | -0.3    |
| South Asia                      | 392       | 645       | 982       | 1,176     | 2.1       | 1.7       | 0.6     |
| Central Asia                    | 32        | 51        | 63        | 63        | 1.8       | 0.9       | -0.04   |
| Middle East and North Africa    | 59        | 85        | 130       | 160       | 1.4       | 1.7       | 0.7     |
| Sub-Saharan Africa              | 156       | 255       | 426       | 622       | 2.1       | 2.1       | 1.3     |

*High-income countries have Gross National Income per capita (GNI p.c.) of US$2,066 or more based on World Bank estimates.


We differentiate urban and rural populations in the world by region. In the first half of the 20th century, the urban transition was concentrated in Europe and in the United States, then, since the 1950s-60s, the phenomenon has spread. Projections for 2000-2030 show a phenomenal growth in the absolute number of new urban populations: more than 3 billion people from 1975 to 2000, more than 5 billion people in
2030. Rural population growth is minimal, from 3.2 to 3.29 billion people. Therefore, demographic growth concerns mostly urban zones.

**Figure 18** Distribution of Worldwide Rural and Urban Population Growth by Level of Income per Capita

Megalopolises are now more numerous and often exceed 10 million people.

**Table 14** Number of Urban Agglomerations by Size (1950-2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of urban area</th>
<th>Number of cities</th>
<th>Urban population (in thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 million or more</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 10 million</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5 million</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500,000 to 1 million</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer than 500,000</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-income countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 million or more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 10 million</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5 million</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer than 500,000</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle- and low-income countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 million or more</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 10 million</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5 million</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer than 500,000</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


n.a. = Not available.
In the near future, city dwellers will essentially live in small to medium size cities. We estimate that in 2015, only 4% of the worldwide population will reside in cities of more than 10 million inhabitants; in low or middle-income countries around 21% of the population will reside in cities of 1 to 2 million. 80% of the urban population will live in relatively small cities, with fewer than 1 million inhabitants. These cities receive very little research attention. They are often spread about in more agricultural regions, their dynamics are specific; they are linked to distinct economic, social and environmental networks.

**Figure 19** *New Urban Areas by Size of City and Level of Country Income (2000-2010)*

Source: Author.

**Didier Orange**

Are suburbs included in large cities?

**[Danielle Labbé]**

That depends on the definitions used. In some cases, we include very wide population areas in the national statistics; in other instances, the “city” is limited to its center.

Contrary to popular belief, the rate of urbanization in developing countries is not accelerating. The urban population in these countries grew by 2% between 2005 and 2010 – this same growth was 2.7% between the 1980s and 2005. Between 1975 and 2000, the percentage of the population in urban zones of developing countries went from 27 to 40%; this increase is similar to that observed in the most developed regions during the first quarter of the 20th century. It is essential to differentiate between the rate of urbanization and the absolute number of new urban dwellers, in particular in highly
populated countries. An increase of 1% of the urban population in China represents millions of people; in Canada, only a few hundred thousand. The most important difference between the current urban transition and the one that occurred during the first half of the 20th century is the shift of this phenomenon toward the countries in the South.

![Urban Growth by Level of Income per Capita](source)

Urbanization has moved from countries that had the highest revenues *per capita* to countries with intermediate to low revenue. Likewise, the distribution of large cities profoundly changed during the last 50 years. Today, London and Paris are small cities compared to Bombay, Sao Paulo, Karachi or Mexico City. Between 2000 and 2015, we expect 19 new cities with populations exceeding 5 million. Only one of these will be in a high-income country. The current urban transition may or may not be accompanied by an expansion of economic activity. Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia have comparable urbanization rates, but here in Southeast Asia urbanization is accompanied by strong economic growth.

The nature and the degree of urban growth have become more dependent on the global economy than they were at the beginning of last century. Globalization repositioned cities in national and international economies; cities play a key role in the economy and finance. Some cities have become detached from their national context and interact with other cities on an international level. These cities are seen as decision centers for the world economy or world financial centers, but also as places for specialized services as well as centers for production and innovation.
that influence the rest of the economy. It is interesting to understand the relationships that these cities maintain with the global economy. Research on these themes has developed significantly over the last twenty years, raising new problems:

- difficulties in ranking world cities according to specific sets of criteria;
- the label “World Cities” was coined by political leaders who seek to apply it to their own city as a branding strategy. As a result, less attention is given to “ordinary cities”: the decision makers in charge of the development of Hà Nội, for example, justified the recent urban expansion (new commercial centers, large satellite cities, new university center in Hòa Lạc, large highways, big transport infrastructures) by indicating it would increase the city’s status;
- sustainable development and the quality of urban life is sacrificed in the quest for “World Cities” status.

The transformation of East and Southeast Asian economies has created new urban forms in the region, especially transnational growth triangles where economic growth and urbanization are closely related – e.g. the 1500 km corridor linking Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo connects 77 cities of at least 200,000 inhabitants.

One last characteristic of the current urbanization is the convergence of the rural and urban lifestyles. Large zones of intense economic activity have emerged around the cities of Southeast Asia. The New Zealand geographer Terry McGee proposes the term “Desakota”\(^7\) or “Extended Metropolitan Region”\(^8\) to designate these mixed spaces where processes and lifestyles mingle. One of the principal results of the “Desakotas” model is that Southeast Asia presents historical and physical characteristics such that urbanization leads to a de-concentration of the industrial economy over vast areas. This fact has two major implications: a new school of thought and a new questioning of the opposition of “urban” versus “rural”.

[Phạm Văn Cự]

Before the extension of the city toward Hà Tây, Hà Nội had approximately 50,000 poor households (90,000 in Hồ Chí Minh City). After the extension, there are 265,000 poor households: has Hà Nội become the city with the largest number of poor households in the country? The answer is tricky because it depends on the definition of poverty, but it would certainly be more appropriate to talk about social differentiation.

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\(^7\) The term is a mix of the Indonesian word for village and city in Bahasa language.
Day 2 - Tuesday, July 20, Afternoon

2.1.3. Change in Land Use and Applications of Geographical Information Systems in Research on the Agrarian Transition in Southeast Asia

[Bruno Thibert]

We will present some applications of geographical information systems – GIS – to research conducted on the agrarian transition. GIS are a collection of geographically located digital data. The data is structured inside of a computerized system. A GIS includes functional modules that can 1) create and modify, 2) interrogate and analyze, and 3) represent with the use of maps, a geographical database, according to semantic and spatial criteria.

Two categories of data are used to model territorial entities: rasters and vectors. A raster is a series of lines and columns of pixels much like a digital photo. Each pixel contains its own information. Vectors are represented by points, lines and polygons (surfaces). The raster databases are in the form of bands, meaning a series of layers of rasters where each pixel of each raster (or band) contains its own information. The vector databases are tables like Excel spreadsheets. Each entity, represented in space by a point, a line or a polygon, corresponds to a line in the spreadsheet that can contain descriptive elements in its columns.

A GIS can superimpose several sets of raster and/or vector data in order to model and analyze the interactions between different entities found on a given territory.

[Phạm Văn Cự]

Does the change in land use, in particular farmland, make up an indicator of the agrarian transition? How should we analyze this process? Several approaches are possible. I use the “space” window in order to examine the dynamics of land use according to several scales of observation.

What is the relationship between “space” and “resources?” What relationships can we define between land use and life style? Does a change in lifestyle have an impact on land use? Let’s take the concrete example of the periphery of Hà Nội.

For the construction of a new conference center and soccer stadium for the city, the peasant families in the Mễ Trì – “Rice pond”– community were expropriated. Large sums of money were spent and the peasants were relocated in new skyscrapers. Many became motorbike or taxi drivers, or construction site guards; others live off of small businesses or built houses that are now rented out to students and workers.
**Figure 21** CHATSEA Windows of Observation on Changes in Land Use

**Spatiality**
How are spaces classified and regulated in association with the resources?
How to grasp these changes in land use in a multi-scaled approach? (household versus territory)?

**Lifestyle**
What is the relationship between land use and lifestyle?

**Actor**
What are the relationships between land use and actors?

**Globalization**
What is the impact?

Source: Author.

**Figure 22** “4 Step” Methodology

1. Earth observation and data acquisition - Pixel and reality –
2. View of society in image mode
3. Classification of land use (FAO)
4. Interdisciplinary Interpretation

Source: Author.
The methodology that I propose depends on observation – land use and analysis of pixels –, cartographical representation – categorization of land use –, the transformation of areas – what are the causes of this dynamism? All the information is brought together in a GIS database. [9]

Figure 23 Remote Sensing System

Color maps of the dynamics of the countryside are projected and commented on: transformation of forests in the north of Việt Nam 1983-1998; urbanization of the city of Hà Nội 1995-2003

Let’s examine the demographic dynamics, as an indicator of the analysis.

**Figure 24** Population Densities - 1990

Source: Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), Columbia University; and Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT).
The initial data are two rasters of population density for the years 1990 and 2005. These rasters were represented by maps where the levels of population density were separated into categories. We see high densities in the deltas of the Red and Mekong rivers, on the island of Java in general, as well as around Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru and the Manila Bay. But when we compare the two maps, it is difficult to observe the changes. Therefore, we proceed with a simple equation: the subtraction of the raster 1990 from that of 2005.
The areas where density has accumulated become obvious: the deltas of the Red and Mekong rivers in Việt Nam, Manila Bay in the Philippines, Bangkok in Thailand, Jakarta and Bandung in Indonesia, Kuala Lumpur and Johor Bahru in Malaysia, and Singapore. The increase reaches 1000 inhabitants per km² in some regions. We also see a decrease in density especially in Thailand and Malaysia. This map illustrates more clearly the predominance of population growth around urban centers.

One of the main problems is the availability of past censuses and the insertion of data within the diverse administrative units – province or states, districts, sub-districts, municipalities, communes and villages. The territorial boundaries have undergone some changes since 1960, either by border movement, administrative fusions or even the creation of new units. The digitizing of historical district boundaries on the scale of Southeast Asia requires a phenomenal amount of work.
We are working with vectors: polygons that are – practically speaking – surface areas. On this map, the surfaces represent protected areas: national parks, wildlife and aquatic reserves, and other types of protected areas. Each polygon contains a set of information such as the year of designation, types of protected flora or fauna and the source for the digitization.
Given that the polygons are geometric entities, it is possible to determine the area of each one with the help of a mathematical operation carried out by software included in the GIS. Then, by using a classification by decade based on the dates of designation, we can observe the evolution of the protected areas. We can then clearly see the rate of growth of these areas: nearly 300,000 km² from 1991 to 2000. Two problems arise during the analysis: a significant number of protected areas do not have a designation date, which makes supplementary documentation necessary if we are to analyze the evolution with more precision; the wide diversity of the digital data sources brings their reliability into question.
The starting data are again vectors: lines to represent roads and railways, and dots for inhabited areas – major cities and their respective populations.

Part of the GIS process brings together all lines in the transportation networks. This lets us determine the intersections between the different modes of transportation in order to make a best estimate of the distances travelled and the cost of a given trip from point A to point B.
We also integrate data from biodiesel plants in this system of line networks. It is thus possible to establish access from a plant to a city and other areas. This whole picture can be put alongside the evolution of the transportation networks in order to examine how the markets have become accessible over time. A complete analysis would require other important data to be added to this system, like maritime and airline networks.
The initial data are the rasters of land use in 1972, 1992, and 2002, as well as the vectorial data for territorial planning. We can see that the forest has receded significantly between 1972 and 1992 because of the increase in white areas on the 1992 map. Territorial planning is the responsibility of the FELDA – Federal Land Authority – a federal agency which aims to relocate poor populations within a policy framework of small cash crop plantations. In the 2002 image, we notice an extension of cultivated areas to the detriment of the forest.

By superimposing the territorial planning data and the receding forest data, it is possible to analyze the correlation between the planned expansion of farm land and deforestation.
This is a Landsat image of Jakarta in 1976. The infrared band differentiates the vegetation from constructed areas. At this time, the boundary of the urban zone is in the center of the image.
The same region was surveyed in 1989. The image shows the expansion of the urban perimeter.
In 2004, the vegetation is limited to the edges of the image. The inhabited space now occupies the majority of the territory.

The raster data – satellite images – allows us to identify the composition of a territory. With electromagnetic wave detectors, the satellite records the waves emitted and reflected from the photographed area on a series of rasters commonly called bands. Each band contains data corresponding to a specific range of waves, either colors of visible light (from violet to red) or infrared. By knowing the spectral signature of entities found on a given territory, i.e. the type and quantity of electromagnetic waves that they emit and reflect, it is possible to use one or several bands to determine what elements make up the analyzed space.

Source: NASA, Earth Observatory.
We can then create another dataset explicitly to attribute the types of land use, according to the needs of the analysis to be carried out.

Hà Nhúng

Can the GIS be used to make predictions?

[Bruno Thibert]

GIS are not an end in and of themselves. They cannot always explain everything that happens in a particular analysis of the agrarian transition. They are a tool, like field questionnaires, to understand a process further. It is possible to integrate data on territorial planning with GIS. Another example would be mapping areas susceptible to flooding following a rise in sea levels.

[Danielle Labbé]

We have to differentiate between the notions of predictions and trends. I think that the GIS are very good tools for examining the trends within a change. Have you used this tool in your own research?

Nguyễn Thị Hoài Hương

Some colleagues have used the GIS for mapping in the field of archaeology in An Giang province; for this they had the help of geographers.

[Phạm Văn Cự]

The GIS is not software but a system; the software is a part of the system. The function of the GIS is to transform data into information and knowledge – this knowledge goes through a political filter in order to be translated concretely into action. What is important for researchers is to build a database. The knowledge base is made up of research questions and specific knowledge in each field. I was asked if the GIS could represent immigration. I answered with another question: what is immigration? It is fundamental to define your field clearly then turn to database specialists in order to identify indicators on the different aspects of immigration. The next step is to integrate these data within the geographic boundaries.

[Bruno Thibert]

The software user interfaces used by GIS analysts are often complex and require a certain amount of training. The interfaces allow the user to define queries or requests. Answers are produced and can be edited so as to organize the information and illustrate the analysis in a coherent way.

Bruno Thibert suggests organizing an evening session to show how a GIS works. Discussions on the data sources (Internet, databases, statistics, etc.) and group work to prepare for Saturday’s synthesis session.

Day 3, Wednesday, July 21, Morning

[Danielle Labbé]

Let’s get back to our initial synthesis results. We will let each working group speak and then Jim Delaney will present market integration and the intensification of regulation. Jean-François Rousseau and Bruno Thibert will also hand out work to be done for Thursday.
Than Thanaren

Our main questions concern the agrarian transition. What is currently the best agrarian transition? What is the role of urbanization in this process? How can we define “poverty” in relation to agrarian transition?

Danielle Labbé

Is the agrarian transition good or bad? This is a very difficult question to answer! We are trying to discuss tools, concepts and methods that allow us to study agrarian transition phenomena by country, region and village. However, it seems interesting to me to keep in mind the effects that these processes have on the populations. Who wins, who loses? Who gets richer, who gets poorer?

Jim Delaney

Each researcher works in a particular discipline with different methodologies, so the answers are therefore different. In my mind, agrarian transition is the transition from an agricultural production model to an industrial production model. One essential question is to know who holds the power in this process of transition and how the profits are distributed. For several years, in Việt Nam, three economists have debated the agrarian transition. Martin Ravallion and Dominique Van de Walle, economists at the World Bank, argue that the land transition associated with the policy of Renewal benefitted a large majority of the peasantry. In the Mekong Delta, the rise of landless peasants is due to the sale of land because new opportunities are being created for the peasants; i.e. agriculture is less competitive in terms of potential profits than industry. The professor Haroon Akram-Lodhi, a Canadian researcher who has been working on this country for several years, uses the same statistical sources and the same methodology. While his observations are identical, he points to different causes: the peasants are obliged to sell their land; the search for wealth outside agriculture is an artifice.

Ma Thị Diệp

Can we associate the definition of the agrarian transition with the shift from small production to a merchant economy? The sale of land leads to the loss of the means of production and a transformation of lifestyle. Is this phenomenon the reason for the widening inequality gap?

Jim Delaney

Rodolphe De Koninck said much about the path taken by the agrarian transition, but little about the history of transition. Each country has its own experience: transition from small producers to large plantations, transition from small producer to small producer who works for the market (such as in the Vietnamese case). The agrarian transition theorists have much to say about the different trajectories of transition: the American trajectory, i.e. capital injected by small producers; the German trajectory, i.e. large owners forcing the market. In Asia, transition operates from below, American style, but with the intervention of the State (Taiwan, South Korea). In Việt Nam, two models are apparent: transition from below in the North, transition from above in the South.

Three working groups (globalization, urbanization and State) present a first draft of a synthesis linked to the agrarian transition.