Tonan Talk

"King Makers/King Breakers: Anthropological Perspectives on Sabah and Sarawak Politics"

December 3rd (Tues.) 2019, 12:00 - 14:00

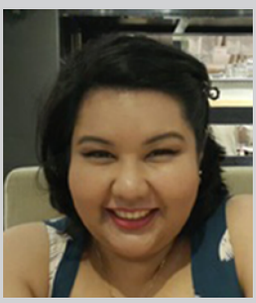
Tonan-tei (Room no. 201)
2F, Inamori Foundation Memorial Building,Kyoto University

One year into a New Malaysia, the politics in Sabah and Sarawak remain unpredictable for most. The two Bornean states of Malaysia continue to influence and be influenced the peninsular of Malaysia, through various party strategies and federal policies. The calculation to remain in power for the Pakatan Harapan coalition cannot be made without taking into account their local allies, and enemies in the Bornean states. Sabah and Sarawak are thus seen as either King Makers, or King Breakers, and are often overlooked by observers of Malaysian Politics.

Also, the research in/on two states have often utilized the same tools of analysis used in the peninsular of Malaysia, greatly neglecting local historical, social and sociology points of views. This includes narratives from vulnerable populations such as the indigenous community, migrants and women. In this seminar, Vilashini Somiah and Sophie Lemiere analyze the recent developments of Sabah and Sarawak politics since the 2018 election's victory and discuss new approaches to conducting research in Borneo. Tian Chua brings his perspective as former Vice President of the Keadilan Party and MP for Batu (Kuala Lumpur).

Speakers:

Dr. Sophie LEMIERE, Ash Center, HKS, Harvard University, Visiting Fellow at CSEAS
Sophie Lemiere is a political anthropologist at Harvard University, and currently a Visiting Fellow at CSEAS. She is currently writing her first monograph on political legitimacy based on her experience in the inner circles of Mahathir from December 2017 to May 2018.



Dr. Vilashini SOMIAH, Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Malaya. Vilashini Somiah is a Sabahan anthropologist who received her PhD from the National University of Singapore. Currently a senior lecturer at the Gender Studies Programme at the University of Malaya, she maintains a keen interest for underrepresented narratives of women, migrants and Bornean living in the interiors.

CHUA Tian Chang, Parti Keadilan Rakyat Vice President and special adviser to the Works Minister of Malaysia. The former Batu MP (2008 -2018), holds a Bachelor of Agricultural Science degree from University of Sydney, Australia(1984-1986) and Bachelor of Arts (History and Philosophy of Science) from University of New South Wales, Australia (1989). He also holds a Master's of Arts (Employment and Labor Studies) from the Institute of Social Studies, in The Hague, Netherlands in 1994.

Organizer: Dr. Sophie LEMIERE,and Dr. Hiroyuki YAMAMOTO, Associate Professor, CSEAS, Kyoto University