

PON SOUVANNASENG

Assistant Professor
Department of Global Studies
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Employment

2020- Assistant Professor of Global Studies, Bentley University
2018 - 2020 Post-Doctoral Research Associate, University of Manchester
2016 - 2018 Senior Teaching Fellow, University College London & SOAS

Education

LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS & POLITICAL SCIENCE

Ph.D. Political Science, 2019

Dissertation: "Losing Ground: The Political Economy of Development & Dependency in the Making of Power in Lao PDR"

Fields: International Political Economy, Comparative Politics, East/Southeast Asian Politics, International Development & International Relations

Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education - Associate Level (HEA), 2012

M.Res. Political Science, 2011

M.Sc. Comparative Politics, 2006

TUFTS UNIVERSITY

B.A., Political Science (High Honors), 2005

SCHOOL FOR SLAVONIC AND EASTERN EUROPEAN STUDIES, UCL

Visiting student; September 2003- June 2004

Coursework in Slavic history and languages, Political Geography

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

California Governor's Scholar, June 2003 - August 2003

Fellowships and Awards

- Bentley Research Council Grant, 2022-2023.
- Bentley Faculty Affairs Council Grant, Winter 2021 - 2022.
- Wilson China Fellow, 2021-2022.
- Mansfield-Luce Asia Scholar, 2020 - 2022.
- East West Center Washington DC - Japan Foundation - US Embassy Tokyo, 2020.
- American Political Science Association, Asia Fellow & individual grant recipient, 2019.
- LSE Teaching Excellence Award Nominee, 2014-2015; 2015-2016.
- International Federation for University Women Recognition Award, 2014-2015.
- US Fulbright Research Grant, United States Department of Education, 2013-2014.
- CLACSO-CODESRIA-APISA South-South Young Laureate Fellowship, 2012.
- Research Studentship, London School of Economics, 2010-2015.
- Undergraduate Research Award, Dean's Office, Tufts University, 2004.
- Summer Scholarship, Summer Scholars Fund, Tufts University, 2002.

Journal Articles & Book Chapters

Souvannaseng, P. (2024) 'Fast Finance and the Political Economy of Catastrophic Dam Collapse in Lao PDR: The Case of Xe Pian-Xe Namnoy,' *Pacific Affairs*, 97 (2) June 2024

Souvannaseng, P. (2022) 'Liquidated: US/Japan-Chinese Rivalry, Financial Crises and Explaining Shifts in Hydropower Finance Regimes in the Mekong,' *Asian Perspective* 46 (1) Winter 2022

Souvannaseng, P. et al. (2022) 'Evolving lending regimes and the political economy of dam financing in Ghana'. *FutureDAMS Working Paper 18*, Manchester: University of Manchester.

Souvannaseng, P. (2022) 'Evidence-based Policymaking' or Epistemic Manufacturing? US-China Geopolitics, Politicized Water Scholarship and the Fight for Narrative Control Along the Mekong. Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson Center, Spring.

Souvannaseng, P. (2021) 'Sino-African Hydropower Projects in Comparative Perspective' in Francois & Habich, *Hydropower in Southwest China: Drivers & Impacts*, (Palgrave IPE: London)

Under Review

Souvannaseng, P. (Submitted) 'Institutional Poaching: Sub-Regional Rivalry and the Politics of Parallel Governance Building Along the Mekong'

Souvannaseng, P. (Submitted) 'Blending or Banking Towards 'Bankability'? Comparative Sino-OECD Export Finance Regimes, Divergent Risk Appetites and the Blurring of Trade and Development in the Global Infrastructure Market'

Souvannaseng, P. (Submitted) 'Financial 'Ghosting' & Intimate Betrayal in Lao PDR: Covid-19 Restructuring & Three Worlds of Ponzi Investing'

Souvannaseng, P. (Submitted) 'Crypto by Fiat: State-Sanctioned Mining at the Crypto-Hydro Nexus and Resource Mobilization at the Frontiers of Global Sovereign Debt in Lao PDR'

Book Manuscript

Souvannaseng, P. (Forthcoming, 2026) *Fast Finance: Searching for Patient Lending in an Impatient World*

Other Publications

Souvannaseng (Forthcoming) 'Bridging the Divide: Aligning & Strengthening US-Mekong Relations through Data Diplomacy' Mansfield Foundation Policy Brief Series

Souvannaseng, P. (2020) 'US-Japanese Strategic Dissonance and Southeast Asian Infrastructure Finance' *Asia Pacific Bulletin* No. 519

Souvannaseng, P. (2020) 'Rohingya genocide case: why it will be hard for Myanmar to comply with ICJ's orders' *The Conversation*

Souvannaseng, P., Plummer, J. & Markannen S. (2020) 'Mapping the evolving complexity of large hydropower project finance in low and lower-middle income countries' *Green Finance* 2 (2), 151

Invited Talks, Seminars & Workshops

- 2024 Valente Center Faculty Research Seminar, Bentley University, Waltham MA, Oct 29
 '(Hydro)-Boom, Doom, Gloom? Reflections on Alternative Developmentalism in the Mekong' -
 Presenter
- 2024 Asia Society, NYC, NY, March 14
 'Politics of Water in the Himalayan Region' - Panelist
- 2023 Michigan State University - Mekong Culture WELL Symposium, Sept 22
 'Inside the Black Box' of Hydro-Infrastructure Decision Making: Triangulating Mekong
 Narratives' - Presenter
- 2023 Asia Pacific Security Center / Maxwell Air University, Honolulu, Hawaii, August 29
 'Mainland Southeast Asia: Political Dynamics, Challenges & Opportunities' - Presenter
- 2022 International Institute of Social Studies, Hague, the Netherlands. Nov 18
 'Crypto by Fiat Order: State Coordination, Physical-Digital Infrastructural Linkages and Digital
 Transformation in Lao PDR' - Workshop Paper Presenter
- 2022 University of Cambridge, Anstee Center, Cambridge, UK, Nov 14
 'Digitalization & Decentralized Finance: Insights from Southeast Asia' - Invited Speaker
- 2022 Johns Hopkins SAIS, Washington DC, Oct 21
 'From Hydro to Crypto? Exploring Physical to Digital Infrastructure Transitions &
 Development Agendas in Contemporary Southeast Asia' - Invited Speaker
- 2022 American Political Science Association Publication Workshop, Bangkok, Thailand, July 14
 'State-Sanctioned Mining & Resource Mobilization at the Frontiers of Global Sovereign Debt
 in Lao PDR' - Paper Presenter & Discussant
- 2021 Michigan State U. / East West Center HI, (Virtual) April
 'Mekong Dams: Debates and the Politics of Evidence' - Panelist
- 2020 Chatham House, Asia Program, London UK, November
 'Too Close for Comfort? China Southeast Asia Relations' - Presenter
- 2020 East West Center -Washington DC, April 20
 'On Unequal Footing: Strategic Dissonance & Failures of Competition in US-Japan-Mekong
 Infrastructure Promotion' - Invited Speaker
- 2019 East West Center -Washington DC, September 6
 'Sub-Regional Rivalry, Institutional Poaching & Parallel Governance Along the Mekong:
 From Liberal to Revisionist Institutionalism' - Invited Speaker
- 2019 Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Washington DC, September
 'Searching for Patient Lending in an Impatient World: Infrastructure, Finance and the Illusion
 of Capital' - Invited Speaker

- 2019 American Political Science Assoc. Asia Workshop, Universiti Sains-Malaya, Penang, June
Institutional Poaching & Regional Subversion Along the Mekong' (article manuscript)
- 2019 Columbia U. SIPA/NYSEARN Public Lecture, NYC, April 9
"Infrastructure as Public Good or Portfolio Asset: Financing Development and
Development Finance Along the Mekong and Ayeyarwaddy"
- 2019 American Association of Geographers Conference, Washington DC, April 7
"Fast Finance: Who Gives a Dam? Hydro-energy Expansion & Environmental Governance
in the Age of Post-DAC Competitive Capital'
- 2018 LSE International Development, Cumberland Lodge, Windsor, UK, Nov 23
"(Mis)-Managing Water Resources Along the Mekong"
- 2015 McGill University Doctoral Workshop 2015, Montreal, Canada, March 15
"Environmental Governance and Changing Land Institutions in the Age of Late
Development: The Case of Lao PDR"

Conferences & Accepted Paper Presentations

- 2024 Association for Asian Studies, Seattle, WA, March 14 – Panel Organizer & Presenter
'Reservoir Politics: Contested Waters & Contested Narratives Along the Mekong'
- 2023 Association for Asian Studies, Boston, MA, March 16 – Paper Presenter
'Financial 'Ghosting' & Intimate Betrayal in Lao PDR: Covid-19 Restructuring & Three Worlds
of Ponzi Investing
- 2022 Association for Asian Studies, Honolulu, HI, March 14 – Paper Presenter
'Risky Business: Fast Finance & Faulty Infrastructure – The Case of XPXN in Lao PDR'
- 2021 American Political Science Association, Seattle WA (virtual) September
'Disaster by Design: Submersed Stakeholders & the Political Economy of Dam Failure'
- 2021 Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics, (virtual) July
'Post-Socialism the Mekong Way: Sino-Investment in the CLMV Countries'
- 2021 International Studies Association, Las Vegas, NV, April
'US/Japan-Chinese Rivalry: Debating Hydropower Quality & Quantity in the Mekong'
- 2019 Development Studies Association Conference, Open University, Milton Keynes, UK June 19
'Financializing Development: Observations from Mainland Southeast Asia'
- 2012 CLACSO-CODESRIA-APISA 5th South-South Summer Institute, Recife, Brazil, 2012
"Rethinking Development: Growth Regimes and Social Protection – the Case of Lao PDR"
- 2011 ASEASUK, Panel on Laos in Historical & Contemporary Transition, Cambridge, UK
"On the Particular & the Shared: Lao PDR in Comparative Perspective"

Research and Professional Experience

Research Consultant, USAID & Numark Consulting, Vientiane, Lao PDR / Boston, MA

August 2023 – March 2024

- Contributed to drafting of Lao PDR's Electrical Vehicle Policy Roadmap for high-level inter-ministerial government committee on planning

Evaluator, Radio Free Asia, Lao Language Program (Virtual)

October 2023 – February 2024

- Evaluator for Radio Free Asia's Lao and English language news programs across radio, web and social media platforms

Post-Doctoral Research Associate, Centre for Crisis Studies & Mitigation U. of Manchester, UK

Jan – July 2020

- Supported PI in developing university research clusters and networks; developed online webinar series and public engagement; conducted self-directed research on energy & disasters

Post-Doctoral Research Associate, U. of Manchester Global Development Institute, Manchester, UK

August 2018 – January 2020

- Leader investigator, 'Mapping Infrastructure Finance in Ghana and Myanmar'

US Fulbright Doctoral Researcher, Lao PDR

September 2013 – August 2014

- Dissertation fieldwork; Research & Teaching Affiliate, Department of Economics, NUOL

Research Analyst, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Geneva, Switzerland

August 2008 – September 2010

- Assistant Coordinator for the UNRISD Flagship Report 2010 on *Combating Poverty & Inequality*; managed the Project on Poverty Reduction and Policy Regimes producing 8 country studies and over 20 thematic background papers

Research Consultant, ASEAN Ad-Hoc Working Group on Labor Practices, Bangkok, Thailand

December 2007 – June 2008

- Drafted study on *Tri-Partite Progressive Labor Practices* for the ASEAN Labour Minister's
- Conducted 100 interviews across nine countries with labor, business, and government representatives; presented policy-relevant findings to high-level government ministers

Project Officer, International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) – London, UK & Singapore

May 2006 – December 2007

- Coordinator for the 2007 multilateral *Shangri-La Dialogue*; edited *Strategic Dialogue* policy series

Teaching Experience

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Bentley University, Dept of Global Studies

Assistant Professor

Program Director, Political Economy & Development concentration, BA Liberal Studies Major

Instructor, Power, Politics & Public Policy in International Development, (UG)

Instructor, The Developing World, (UG)

Instructor, Comparative Political Analysis (UG)

Instructor, States, Business & Environment in Asia (TBD)

UCL Dept. of Political Science & School of Public Policy

Fellow in Political Economy & International Development; BSc in PPE Programme Director

Acting Program Director, BSc in Politics, Philosophy, Economics (PPE) degree. 2017-2018.

Instructor, Introduction to Political Science (UG). 2017-2018.

Instructor, Undergraduate Capstone Workshop (UG). Spring 2018.

Instructor, International Development and Public Policy (UG). Spring 2017.

Instructor, Political Economy of Development (PG). Autumn 2016.

TA, Public Policy & Economic Analysis (PG). Autumn 2017.

School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Dept. of Politics

Senior Teaching Fellow

Instructor, States & Society in Asia and Africa (PG). 2017-2018.

Instructor, Theory & Evidence in Contemporary Development (UG). 2014-2015.

UC Berkeley in London

TA, Comparative Politics (UG). 2016-2017.

London School of Economics & Political Science

Fellow in Development Management

TA, Development Management (PG). 2014-2016.

TA, Political Economy of Advanced Nations (UG). Summer 2012.

TA, Democracy/Democratization (UG). Spring 2011/13

TA, LSE 100 (UG). 2011-2012.

Research and Teaching Interests

Comparative & International Political Economy; Political Economy of Development & International Public Policy; East/Southeast Asian Political Economy; IR & Comparative Politics; Energy, Infrastructure & Environmental Politics; Research Methods (Qual/Quant/Mixed)

Student Supervision

Primary supervisor, 1 doctoral candidate, Bentley University.

Primary supervisor, 2 Undergraduate capstones, Bentley University.

Principal Investigator & Mentor, 3 Undergraduate Research Assistants, Bentley University.

Primary supervisor on 3 MSc dissertations, 2018-2019, University of Manchester.

Primary supervisor on 13 MSc dissertations, 2016-2018, UCL.

Service & Committee Membership

Faculty Affairs Committee, Bentley University, 2022 - Present

Dept. Student Engagement & Events Committee, Bentley University, 2020 - Present

Dept. Selection & Hiring Committee, 2021 & 2024, Bentley University, 2021 & 2024

Director, Political Economy & Dev't. concentration for BA in Liberal Studies, Bentley 2020-2023

Organizer, Campus Town Hall on Anti-Asian Violence, Bentley University, 2021

Dept. Anti-Racism Statement Committee, Bentley University, 2020

Chair, Staff-Student Liaison Committee, UCL, 2017-2018
 Chair, Undergraduate Steering Committee, UCL, 2017-2018
 Member, Department Teaching Committee & MA Exam Board, UCL 2017-2018

Peer Review for Journals

Development & Change; Third World Quarterly; Journal of Labour & Society

Professional Membership

American Political Science Association
 American Association for Geographers
 Development Studies Association
 Association for Southeast Asian Studies UK
 Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics (Network B Organizer for Annual Conference)
 Association for Asian Studies (Thai, Lao, Cambodian Studies Group, Board Member)

Software Skills

NVIVO, SPSS, STATA, 'R', Python, GIS and MS Office/Excel

Languages

English (Fluent); Lao, Thai, French (Proficient), Mandarin & Serbian (Basic)

References

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 London WC2R 2LS
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Prof. John T. Sidel
 Sir Patrick Gillam Chair in
 International & Comparative
 Politics
 Department of Government
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Prof. William Hurst
 Chong Hua Professor of Chinese Development
 University of Cambridge
 Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
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Prof. Mary Mostafanezhad
 Professor
 University of Hawai'i at Manoa
 Geography and Environment
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