CKS · **HSEPP** THE HUMAN SCIENCES ENCOUNTERS IN PHNOM PENH · Royal University of Fine Arts · **IRD** Institut de recherche pour le développement

មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលខេមរសិក្សា
The Center for Khmer Studies

បាឋកថាសាធារណៈ
CKS-HSEPP Joint Lectures Series
Phnom Penh

Infrastructure as Creative Action: Online Buying, Selling, and Delivery in Phnom Penh

By Margaret Jack

Venue:
The Royal University
of Fine Arts
Meeting Room
No. 72, Ang Yukanthor
(St. 19), corner of St. 178,
Phnom Penh

Date:
October31, 2017
Time: 6:00pm

Please Confirm attendance by:
27 October, 2017
Free Entrance

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Abstract:

The lecture will present a complex global sales and logistics network based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, which utilizes Internet tools (particularly Facebook) as well as a suite of offline tools such as feature (non-smart) phones, paper receipts, and motorcycles to facilitate the buying and selling of clothes and other commodities. Against the gap or import models that sometimes limit understandings of technological change and circulation, we argue that the consumers, business owners, delivery drivers, and call center staff play active and formative roles in producing this infrastructure, integrating new tools into older cultural practices and determining how they work within the limits and conventions of the environment. She argues that resourceful and imaginative activities such as these constitute a form of creative infrastructural action and are central to the ways that new tools circulate in the world, though they often go unrecognized as innovation.

Maggie collected the bulk of the data for this paper in January and June-August of 2016. She conducted over 30 formal interviews with Cambodian shop owners turned- e-commerce-entrepreneurs, online shoppers, call center staff, and delivery drivers, and engaged in many more informal conversations with Cambodian youth about online buying. She also conducted participant observation in shops and accompanying drivers on delivery runs.

Maggie is a PhD candidate at Cornell University in the Department of Information Science. Maggie utilizes her academic background in the history of science and professional experience in the technology industry to approach problems of global computing with multiple lenses. Her work lies at the intersection of human computer interaction and science and technology studies.