

ISA ONLINE GUEST LECTURE

‘SAUTÉ’ URBANISATION**THE DIALECTICS OF SPACE AND PLACE IN
CHINA’S SOUTH-WESTERN PERIPHERY****ANTONELLA DIANA***Department of Asian and North African Studies, Ca’Foscari University of Venice, Italy*

Over the last 20 years of “Reform and Opening Up”, China has embraced an explicit policy of urbanisation. In the literature, space and place-making are often perceived as distinct or conflicting dimensions of urban change, whereby the former is severed from or dominates the latter. Richard Sennett has described this dynamic as an asymmetry between *ville* (state initiated space-building) and *cit  * (place-dwelling by local residents). By focusing on the multi-ethnic south-western frontier of Yunnan, this paper explores the effects of recent urbanisation on Tai ethnic minority communities in the emerging border city of Jinghong. It suggests that we need to conceptualise urbanisation in dialectic terms rather than as a dichotomy. Specifically, it argues that urbanisation can produce a two-way dynamic whereby the *ville* co-opts the *cit  * and the *cit  * permeates the *ville* through consensus. The resulting ‘saut  ’ urbanisation’ captures these mutually informing practices of state space construction and ethnic place-making.



Dr. Antonella Diana is a Marie Curie +I Fellow at the Department of Asian and North African Studies, Ca’ Foscari University of Venice. She holds a PhD in Social Anthropology from the Australian National University, and she recently completed a Marie Curie project at Ca’Foscari on the theme of urbanization in China’s southwestern borderlands.

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