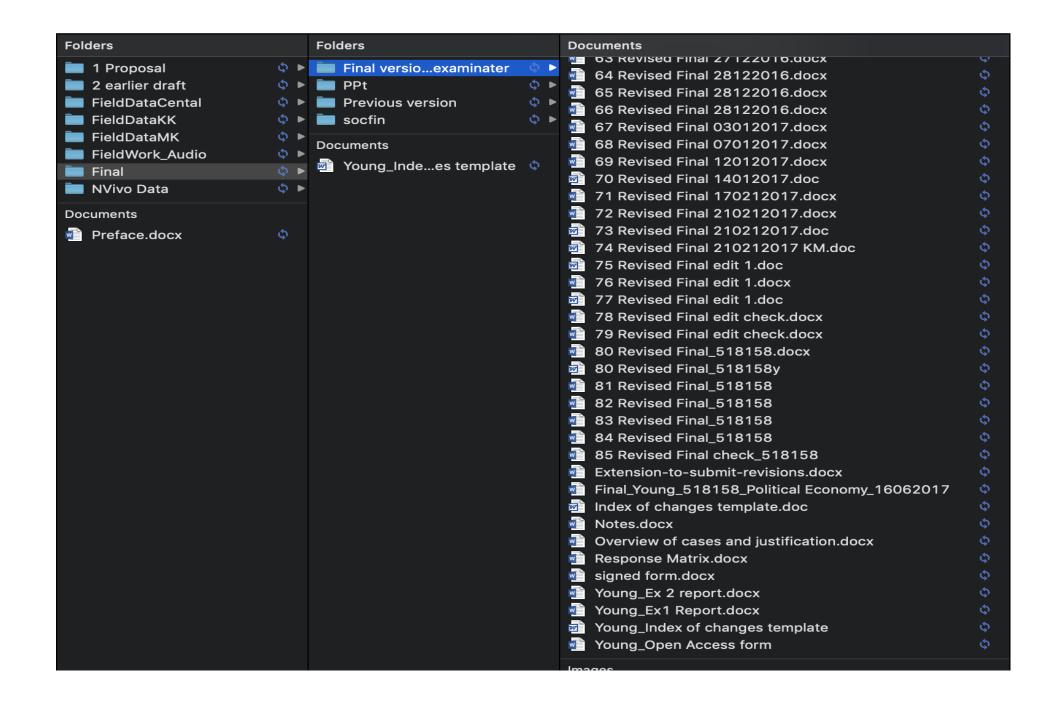
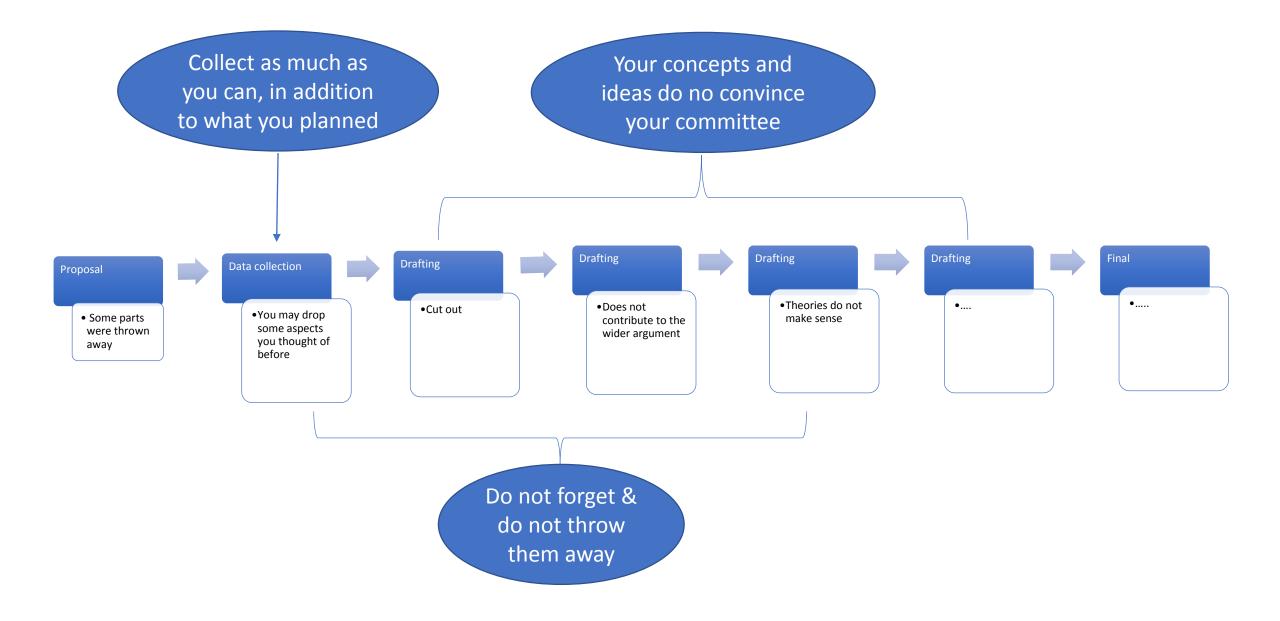
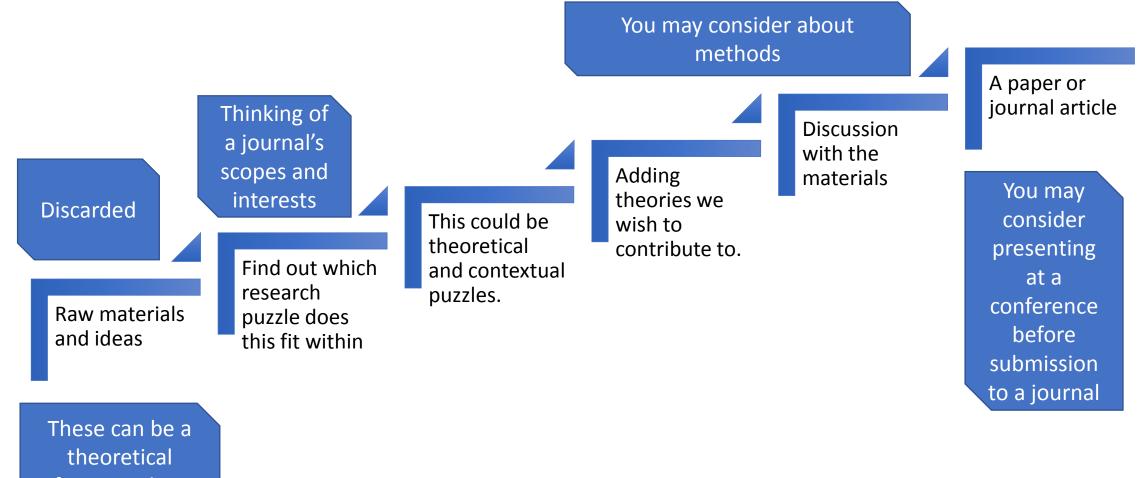
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## Popular Resistance in Cambodia: The Rationale Behind Government Response

Young Sokphea

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## Abstract

Agrarian resistance often occurs as a result of expropriation and dispossession of poor farmers' land and other properties. This paper examines how cost-benefit rational choice determined the government of Cambodia's response to poor farmers' resistance to large-scale land acquisition for an agro-industrial investment. Theoretically, whatever mechanism a government chooses to respond to resistance, the aim is to retain more benefits, especially political legitimacy. In this study, the government, in collaboration with private companies, opted for a combination of strong repression and partial concession in response to the resistance by the communities. The study argues that this response is basically determined by cost-benefit calculations. However, the purpose is not to retain political legitimacy as theoretically argued, but to protect the economic interests of the client-patron networks that had developed between foreign companies and the powerful local politico-commercial personages associated with the regime.