Seminar

Under the Boot: Military-Civil Relations in Thailand since the Coup

Dr. Paul Chambers

Date: 12 September 2016 (Monday)
Time: 4 pm – 5:30 pm
Venue: 6-214, Lau Ming Wai Academic Building (AC 3), CityU

Abstract

Thailand’s May 2014 military putsch has ushered in a period of authoritarian control not seen in the country for 40 years. A spiraling number of Thais suspected by the ruling junta of subversion have been arrested for “attitude adjustment” with the number of political prisoners soaring to over 1000 persons. Allegations of torture and sexual abuse of prisoners by soldiers have grown. Political rights and liberties have been quashed. Military courts have become the dominant judiciary of Thailand. Soldiers and junta leaders act with legal impunity. Finally, the junta has sought to enact a new constitution which enshrines a greater political role for the military across the country. In mid-2016 the junta has become even more repressive as opponents in Thai civil society increasingly test the limits of their resistance. How successful has the junta been in establishing mechanism to ensure their perseverance in power? What are the internal and external challenges to the junta? What is the future of Thai military rule or the beginning of demilitarization? This presentation addresses these questions.

Short bio

Paul Chambers currently serves as Director of Research, Institute of Southeast Asian Affairs (ISEAA), Faculty of Law, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand and as Research Affiliate at both the German Institute of Global Area Studies (GIGA) in Hamburg, Germany, as well as the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) in Frankfurt, Germany. His research interests focus on civil-military relations in Southeast Asia; international politics of Southeast Asia; dictatorship and democratization in Southeast Asia; and the Political Economy of Less Developed Nations in the Greater Mekong Sub-region. Chambers has written four books (three books on the security sector in Southeast Asia) as well as numerous journal articles and book chapters about the military, democratization, and international politics of Southeast Asia. His articles have appeared in Asian Survey, Critical Asian Studies and the Journal of Contemporary Asia, among others. He has focused his research upon Thailand, the Philippines, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos.

All are welcome. Language: English
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