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Philip Hirsch is Emeritus Professor of Human Geography at the University of Sydney and is a research affiliate at Chiang Mai University. He has published extensively on environment, development and agrarian change in Southeast Asia and has carried out rural fieldwork in Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia over a period of more than three decades. His recent books include (with Derek Hall and Tania Li) *Powers of Exclusion: Land dilemmas in Southeast Asia* (Singapore University Press 2011); (with Ben Boer, Fleur Johns, Ben Saul and Natalia Scurrah) *The Mekong: A socio-legal approach to river basin development* (Earthscan/Routledge 2016); and the *Routledge Handbook of the Environment in Southeast Asia* (Routledge 2017).

Land Governance in the Mekong Region: Revisiting Contexts and Rethinking Concepts

Abstract

Scholarship and political mobilisation around agrarian change in mainland Southeast Asia have long placed land at the centre of analysis and advocacy. From the 1960s to 1980s, scholarship on land worked within a framework of agrarian political economy in which class relations associated with control over land, labour and capital were central. Revolutionary and reform programs galvanised around “land to the tiller” campaigns. After a period of decline in such concerns and political language, in part explicable by the changed context of critical scholarship and political action in a post-Cold War world (and its manifestation in mainland Southeast Asia), and in part by a shift in interest toward deagrarianisation, urbanisation and industrialisation, there has been a return to interest in land issues. However, contexts have changed, as have the conceptual tools employed to study and the language to advocate for agrarian justice. This presentation explores the revived interest in land and the contexts in which such interest is generated. Agendas are often framed in terms of “governance”, and scholarly work employs analyses based around themes such as access and exclusion, land grabbing, customary tenure and responsible agricultural investment.

5 March 2018
(Monday)
4:00-5:30pm

B5-417, AC1

Yeung Kin Man Academic Building

All are welcome

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