



The Department of Anthropology  
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

presents a seminar

by

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on

# The Right to an Urban Future: Reflections of Fieldwork on Hong Kong's Land Activism

Friday, 6 December 2019

1:00 – 2:30 pm

Room 12 Humanities Building

New Asia College, CUHK

A light lunch will be served at 12:30 pm. First come first served.

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In the past decade, Hong Kong's government has often been criticized as hard-selling a set of urban development projects to its citizens. These projects are advertised as offering unmissable opportunity to sustain the city's prosperity, especially by timely integrating with the economic development in nearby regions. In a way, the integration has strengthened the existent urban development model, which had a glorious past but has also led to pressing problems. Meanwhile, this hegemonic urban development regime has received waves of challenges from grassroots movements since the mid 2000s. These movements have focused first on the preservation of old neighborhoods, then iconic public spaces, and finally social-spatial injustice in rural land grabs. Amidst this atmosphere, city planning, land uses, and the "urban future" have therefore become contested domains where new political demands and urban imaginations emerge. My dissertation examines how these top-down city plans are confronted by grassroots actions aimed at democratizing urban planning and promoting alternative urbanism, mostly in the New Territories. In the talk, I will show a few examples of these actions with my preliminary analysis and invite the audience to reflect on Hong Kong's "urban question" together.

**Shan HUANG** is a PhD Candidate in Anthropology at Stanford University. He just finished 15 months of ethnographic fieldwork in Hong Kong, where he focused on the contested fields of land politics and city planning. His dissertation examines how new political demands and visions of urban future emerge through grassroots groups' intervention into these fields in post-Handover Hong Kong. It seeks to offer an in-depth account of Hong Kong's political culture, as well as reflections on urbanism of our times.

ALL INTERESTED ARE WELCOME