

Visiting Speaker Series 2017-18 Term 1

When the Past is More Than Just Scarce Resource: A Reflection on the Ethnography of Space, Place, and Hope in Urban Shanghai

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17 Oct 2017 (Tuesday)

4:00 – 5:30pm

Room 1118, 11/F,

Yasumoto International Academic Park



ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Non Arkaraprasertkul is an architect, urban designer, historian, and anthropologist. His research interests lie at the crossroads of transdisciplinary research between design and the social sciences. He has conducted research, written, and published widely on urban studies and urban design, architectural history and philosophy, and cultural studies and anthropology. He received his PhD in anthropology from Harvard, MPhil in China Studies from Oxford, and SMArchS and Urban Design Certificate from MIT.

ABOUT THE TALK

In Shanghai, one can not only see, but live in the remnants of the city's semi-colonial legacy through the remaining lane houses known as the lilong. Heavily altered to accommodate the massive influx of residents during the era of high communism, these houses are parts of the memories of local Shanghainese residents and present the uniqueness that renders them "historic" buildings to the outsiders. In this presentation, I look at the local residents' savviness in capitalising on the cultural capital of "heritage" as a source of income, and more importantly, a defence against economic precariousness. In rethinking classic gentrification whereby residents of higher income simply push the original working-class residents out of their own neighbourhood, I argue that the high level of flexibility regarding the notion of "heritage" is giving rise to another form of gentrification: It is the original residents are those who profit from their ability to "sell" the old buildings as historically important "heritage" to the middle-class residents.

Free Admission

The seminar is conducted in English

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