

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
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SEMINAR

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HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF ASIA-PACIFIC STUDIES



Dr. Xianchun Zhang

Assistant Professor,
Department of Land
Management,
Zhejiang University

Formation of City-regions from Bottom-up Initiatives: Investigating Coalitional Developmentalism in the Pearl River Delta

ABSTRACT

By formulating a conceptual framework of coalitional developmentalism, this presentation aims to understand the formation of city-regions from bottom-up initiatives in China. Coalitional developmentalism extends state developmentalism with more emphasis on the coalitional politics under which local state agents form a strategic coalition spontaneously to pursue regional growth. The case study of Shenzhen-Shanwei Special Cooperation Zone (*Shen-Shan Zone*) in the Pearl River Delta uncovered that the coalitional developmentalism aims to develop regional governance capacity so as to overcome territorial fragmentation owing to jurisdiction-based development. This case of *Shen-Shan Zone* has four theoretical implications. First, the flexibility of state regulation is central to forge the deliberate scale-building processes oriented toward regional governance. Second, bottom-up initiatives in building city-regions have emerged through a decentralized but integrated organizational structure and the strong governance capacity of advanced cities. Third, local state agents devote their effort to creating market-favored climate to attract enterprises, whereas the developmental discourse of the local state agents at the scale of city-region is partially fulfilled by making use of external factors, e.g., the economic clout and geographical location of the *Shen-Shan Zone*. Lastly, bottom-up innovative behaviors unfolding against the specific context of coalitional politics associated with top-down state spatial interventions become unique characteristics of the so-called state spatiality in post-reform China.

LANGUAGE

English

DATE

22 Apr 2021 (Thu)

TIME

4:30 – 6:00 pm (GMT+8)

ZOOM MEETING

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(no password required)

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Xianchun Zhang currently serves as an assistant professor in the School of Public Affairs, Zhejiang University. He completed his Ph.D. at The University of Hong Kong. Previously, he served as a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Geography and Resource Management, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. His works have been published in journals, such as *Urban Geography*, *Land Use Policy*, *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, and *Cities*. His research interests are urban and regional studies, with particular reference to city regionalism of China. His primary research fields include city-regional integration policy, state spaces of capitalism and socialism, and management of urban growth and collaborative planning in transitional China.

For inquiries, please contact Prof. Calvin Chung (Tel: +852 3943 9791; Email: calvin.chung@cuhk.edu.hk)



香港中文大學香港亞太研究所
Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

