

THE 269th IDEC ASIA SEMINAR

# URBAN Transformation

and the middle classes in Asia : A perspective from the Philippines

**LECTURER : Dr. Michael Pinches**

[Professor of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Western Australia,  
Visiting Professor of IDEC]

Accelerating over much of the past half century, people across Asia have increasingly come to reside and pursue their livelihoods in cities. Once this was seen almost solely through the lens of growing urban poverty and disorder, identified with the growth of squatter settlements and the informal sector. Today though, urbanization in the region is commonly associated with increasing manufacturing employment, and a rapidly expanding consumer middle class which, according to one source, is expected to more than double over the next fifteen years. While bodies like the World Bank and OECD, as well as national governments, celebrate such trends as a measure of development in Asia, research at the local level demonstrates not only the variability and complexity of these trends, but also their often ambiguous and contradictory character for the people experiencing them.

In this paper I explore these latter features of urban middle class formation in reference to cities in the Philippines, emphasizing, in particular, their conflictual social, cultural and spatial dimensions, centred on relations between the middle class and other urban dwellers. The paper focuses especially on the ideology and phenomenon of middle class civil society and its relation to public space.



**Date** : May 9th, Friday, 2014, 14:00 - 16:00

**Venue** : Small Conference Room, IDEC, Hiroshima University

**Inquiry** : Koki Seki [082-424-6948, [seki@hiroshima-u.ac.jp](mailto:seki@hiroshima-u.ac.jp)]