

CONFLICT, SECURITY AND POLITICAL REGIMES IN ASIA  
A Public Seminar Series

*Liberal Markets, Illiberal Governance*

A Public Seminar presented by Professor Richard Robison

In the 1990s the orthodoxy in development thinking shifted from a simple agenda to promote markets through policy reform to a new concern for containing the various risks that seemed invariably to accompany their rise. Yet, in the struggle to construct frameworks of governance within which markets would be regulated and disciplined, neo-liberal programmes have often floundered in the face of competing programmes. Two counter-intuitive explanations for a seeming paradox are central. In important instances, rather than providing the circumstances in which middle classes and business are mobilised around a neo-liberal agenda, the advance of markets has given rise to and consolidated powerful social and political coalitions that require an accommodation of markets within illiberal forms of governance. At the same time, the tensions within the neo-liberal camp and the contending ideas and interests that politically drive its agendas have made its role highly ambiguous and, in some cases, directly supporting illiberal outcomes. These points will be argued through comparative studies of Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, South Korea and Russia, illustrating different varieties of state-society relationships.

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2006

12:30 pm

Senate Room

Murdoch University

All Welcome

Richard Robison is currently Professor of Political Economy at the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague and is a former Director of the Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University. He is one of the most influential international scholars of Asian politics and political economy and one of the few Australians to have been published in the prestigious US journal *World Politics*. His latest books include the co-authored *Re-organising Power in Indonesia: The Politics of Oligarchy in an Age of Markets* (Routledge, 2004, co-authored), the edited *The Neo-Liberal Revolution: Forging the Market State* (Macmillan, 2006), and the co-edited *The Political Economy of South-East Asia: Markets, power and contestation* (Oxford University Press, 2006) and *East Asia and the Trials of Neoliberals* (Routledge, 2006). Among the journals he has recently published articles in are *New Political Economy*, *Journal of Development Studies* and *Critical Asian Studies*.