

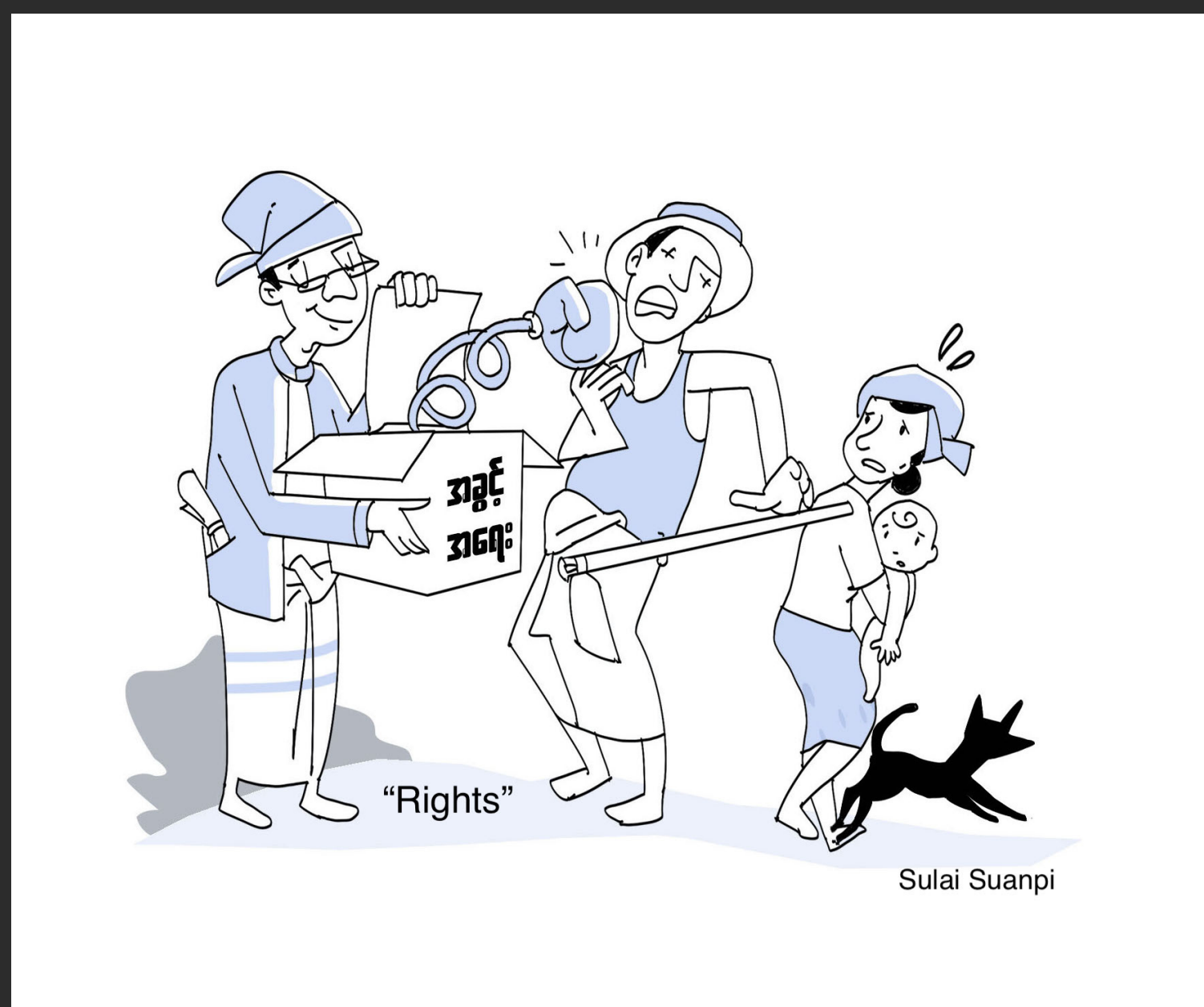
"Land Reform amidst Legal Debris: Learning Risky Rights in Myanmar"

Dr. Hilary Oliva Faxon, UC-Berkeley

Tuesday, 25 January: 6 pm PST, 9 pm EST

Wednesday, 26 January: 9 am ICT, 11 am JST, 1 pm AEDT

Register for lecture: <https://bit.ly/3A38Jby>



Abstract: Land reforms were central to Myanmar's precarious project of democracy in the 2010s. After decades of violent dispossession and everyday suffering, elites touted property rights as a solution to conflict and a vehicle for development. But on the ground, farmers experienced land reform as risky rights. Drawing on ethnographic and participatory research in grassroots land mobilizations and high-level policy-making, I show how legal and lived histories of land control shaped the prospects for reforms. Rather than quietly accepting land titles, farmers stretched their acreage, shifted land use categories, and leveraged the language of the law to make new sorts of claims. In so doing, they negotiated risky rights in ways that built on the longstanding practices of cultivation and connection that I call "surviving the state." In the aftermath of Myanmar's 2021 military coup, understanding the limits of land reform is essential not only to evaluating the decade of democracy, but also to imagining revolutionary futures.

The **THINKING RIGHTS, WRITING JUSTICE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA** online lecture series is a project of the Justice in Southeast Asia Lab (JSEALab). The JSEALab is part of a five-year initiative on Social Justice housed in the Center for Southeast Asian Studies and the Human Rights Program at UW-Madison. Idea exchange and public-facing events aim to foster collaboration in and beyond the university. Follow the JSEALab on Twitter/Facebook or check the website [<https://seasia.wisc.edu/sjsea-project/jsealab>] for the full schedule and links to register.



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