

GRASSROOTS POLITICAL RESPONSES TO AGRARIAN CONFLICTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION IN THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN ANTHROPOCENE



ST. CATHARINE'S COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



18-20 APRIL, 2023 (HYBRID)

In line with calls to 'provincialise' the Anthropocene, this interdisciplinary conference aims for a contextual analysis of the faultlines and fragmentations of the Southeast Asian Anthro-pocene and its political mobilisations.

We approach this endeavour through a reflexive analysis of grassroots political responses to the interlinked Anthropocenic problem spaces of environmental degradation and agrarian conflicts in the region.

We aim to understand which moral, economic, ecological, and political concerns motivate grassroots movements and how these motivations shape political subjectivities and practices.

Thinking through these issues will illuminate the ways in which the Anthropocene is encountered, navigated, and transformed for the future through grassroots politics in Southeast Asia.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

DAY 1

18 April, 2023

11.00–11.15

SOPHIA HORNbacher-SCHÖNLEBER

WELCOME ADDRESS

11.15–12.45

SITI MAIMUNAH (Passau University) & REBECCA ELMHIRST (University of Brighton)

KEY NOTE 1: EXTRACTIVISMS AND RESPONSE-ABILITY: PRACTICING A POLITICS OF CONNECTION THROUGH TUBUH TANAH AIR

12.45–14.00

LUNCH BREAK

14.00–16.00

PANEL 1: CONSEQUENCES AND CONTESTATION OF (TOP-DOWN) GOVERNANCE

GUEST CHAIR: ADAM TYSON (UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS)

ARINA RAHMA (TU Berlin), AMELIA MEGA (TU Berlin) & Erdin Juwita Puspaningtyas (Rame-Rame Foundation Jakarta)

POLITICAL CONTESTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION IN KAMPUNG KERANG HIJAU: LOCAL ACTORS AND LEGAL INSTITUTIONS (ONLINE)

Jakarta is facing chronic flooding and land subsidence which affect thousands of people who live in flood-prone neighbourhoods. The most affected area is the densely populated coastal urban villages in the northern part of the city, such as Kampung Kerang Hijau. It has been facing significant agrarian and socio-economic challenges exacerbated by a combination of flooding, global climate change, burgeoning northern coast landscape transformation, and heavy mercury contamination in the green mussel cultivation. Not only have these problems affected the fishermen community that has existed since the 1980s and their livelihood, but the government's proposed solutions through mangrove plantation and seawall construction have threatened kampung residents to relocate. On the other hand, the government's responses to flooding without significant participation of the impacted communities have also been the key questions in various research over the years. This paper explores the ways in which political contestation and the processes of environmental degradation intersect in Kampung Kerang Hijau, with a focus on the experiences and perspectives of grassroots actions through an analysis of interviews and other primary sources. The community deserves increased attention from policymakers to empower local stakeholders as decision-makers and strengthen existing resilience strategies of themselves. Therefore, the potential for community-led efforts to bring positive changes to the city's rights of space and resources is also examined.

LUBABUN NI'AM (Heidelberg University), RINI ASTUTI (Australian National University), DARMANTO (Czech Academy of Sciences), UMI LATIFAH (World Resources Institute), PUTRA S. PRAMANA (WALHI) & DELIMA SILALAH (KSPPM)

BEYOND FAILURE NARRATIVES: CONTINGENT ARTICULATIONS AND DIVERSITY OF ACTORS' RESPONSES TO LARGE-SCALE FOOD PROVISIONING PROGRAMME IN INDONESIA

Drawing from a case study of the Indonesian government's food estate project in North Sumatra, this paper examines the ways in which diverse actors respond to a top-down agrarian governmental project. By examining the national and local food provisioning discourses, policies, and practices, this paper attempts to situate the project as a speculative development linked to global investment opportunities. The food estate project is an assemblage of disparate elements consisted of powerful global narrative of food crises, semi-authoritarian bureaucracy, and a particular governmentality that intends to modernise rural agrarian population, and landscape reappropriation techniques which rely on kinship and ethnic sentiments. The paper argues that the project generates convolution and confusion and thus enables project stakeholders, NGOs, local governments, and diverse rural villagers of Batak people origin to creatively converge their agendas while simultaneously articulate their positions and views on the project either as a new source of hope or nightmare. By highlighting the diversity and contradictory of actors' responses, this research advances our understanding on the contingency and articulation of a state project that are discursive and performative in nature. Thus, this paper presents a chance to view large-scale agrarian programmes beyond their failure narratives, understanding them as a new, particular mode of reorganization of power, people, and landscape.

HUI YUN CHER (France Centre of Southeast Asia, Paris)

FROM 'STOP CYANIDE' TO 'HIMPUNAN HIJAU': EXPLORING ENVIRONMENTALISM AND MALAYSIAN POLITICS

The extractive industries and plantations disrupt the natural cycle of the tropical environment and redefine the quotidian experiences since the colonial era (Kathirithamby-Wells 2005; Vincent & Rozali 2005, Sham 1998). The extractive projects across contemporary Malaysia encountered historical inquiries on the interconnection of environment, politics and civil society movement. Tracing the conservation policies and ecological awareness among civil society to as early as the late 19th century (Guérin & et al. 2017, Kathirithamby-Wells 2005), the grassroots against extractive industries in Malaysia expedited over the last two decades and joined the global dynamics of environmental pursuit. The bottom-up processes not only draw quotidian manifestations against social and ecological injustice but also political confrontations and conversations among villagers, NGOs, lawyers, politicians, mining company and local authorities.

Setting the scene at the Bukit Koman gold mine at the forest main range, this paper examines how a century-long site transformed into a contemporary contested terrain entangled with complex sociological, political and legal tensions. To what extent did the transgenerational experiences in a remote extractive zone interactively shape the local grassroots activism (Stop Cyanide, Himpunan Hijau) and contribute to the national democratic movement (Bersih)? How did civil society confront and navigate to renew extractive discourses at the centre of the political agenda and impact the course of the general elections of 2008, 2013 and 2018? How did various grassroots initiatives incorporate environmental realities into ideas of 'green democratisation' and 'green politics' and forge a new pattern of socio-political, ecological and legal narratives beyond extractive practices?

NGUYEN DANG DAO (Yenching academy, Peking University)

GREEN EVICTIONS: AN INQUIRY INTO URBAN EXCLUSIVE POLITICAL ECOLOGY, AND URBAN-RURAL DUALITY IN VIETNAM (ONLINE)

Agrarian conflicts and environmental degradation in Vietnam have been significantly affected by beautification and waterfront development projects in urban areas. The paper foregrounds poverty-stricken farmers and fishermen, or "boat people", the most marginalized communities who have been succumbing to multiple overlapping modes of exclusion, including sociocultural, environmental, spatial, and economic exclusion, exacerbated by the unique "half-baked" urbanization process. Adrift on the Red River in Hanoi for thirty years, today's boat people's struggle for survival now resides with the lack of access to accommodation, sanitation, electricity, or job security. They have been suffering from multiple modes of exclusion, exacerbated by the implementation of a flagship waterfront development project of the government, the Red River Zoning Plan, which put them at risk of mass eviction and forced them to exercise different resistive strategies to fight against exclusion. This paper seeks to understand how the state's spatial planning shapes urban exclusion and inclusion in heterogeneous forms. How does the urban transformation into a green and modern urban landscape generate intended and unintended consequences for social equity, particularly in terms of agrarian land eviction? How do riverine urbanites' main livelihoods—agricultural activities—inform and are informed by the rural-urban duality in Hanoi? The research contributes to theoretical and methodological insights into the intersection of environmental challenges in Southeast Asia Anthropocene and bottom-up political responses to agrarian land conflicts.

16.00–17.00 **DRINKS RECEPTION**

8.30-10.30

PANEL 2: GRASSROOTS SUBJECTIVITIES AND COALITIONS

GUEST CHAIR: DEIRDRE MCKAY (UNIVERSITY OF KEELE)

ANNISA SABRINA HARTOTO (University of Melbourne)*THE ROLE OF FEMINIST BROKERAGE IN MOBILISING GENDERED RESISTANCE*

Agrarian conflicts have a devastating impact on many Indonesian rural communities. Civil society organisations have responded to this agrarian crisis in a variety of ways, competing for influence in Indonesian agrarian politics. In this paper I present a case study of a longstanding conflict between local communities and an industrial sugarcane plantation in Takalar, South Sulawesi. I focus on how civil society organisations support the Takalar community, and particularly women in the community. Women have increasing involvement in agrarian conflicts, and feminist civil society organisations have an important role in supporting women's collective action. By bringing together concepts of brokerage, collective action frames and critical pedagogy, I investigate how a feminist organisation raises critical consciousness among its members and translates this consciousness into practice by expanding women's repertoire of political responses using non-violent actions. This organisation also facilitates women's spaces for influence in the local fields of power and establishes multi-scalar linkages for women's collective action by translating local grievances into a more powerful language of women's rights and feminist values. I argue that while political brokerage may not bring significant resolutions to land conflict, neither may it succeed in bringing about gender-equitable land rights, a feminist brokerage is crucial for women's empowerment and mobilisation, which are inherent for their collective actions. This study also demonstrates that a feminist brokerage may also generate both coalition-building and fragmentation among grassroots communities and the civil society organisations that support them.

THOMAS STODULKA (FU Berlin)*WORKING WITH THE SOIL: CONTESTING INEQUALITIES AND SHAPING FUTURES IN TIMOR-LESTE'S PERMACULTURE YOUTH CAMPS*

In this talk, I localize the travelling concept of permaculture in different contexts of learning across Timor-Leste as a systematic pathway into studying emergent ecological awareness regimes and learning practices. For example, juxtaposing and contrasting permaculture-based school curricula and water conservation projects in Timor-Leste with projects implemented by international NGOs based on global learning and decontextualized food sovereignty policies opens up anthropological inquiries into a variety of phenomena, such as contrasting the shaping of young person's selves, personhoods, and future citizenship, issues of planetary health, nutrition, and well-being, or ways and strategies of (un-)learning and contesting normative gender roles.

By focusing on the practice-oriented pedagogy of permaculture youth camps in Timor-Leste, I inquire whether localized ecosocial solidarity movements can contest state-tolerated inequalities and marginalities through revitalizing local knowledge and forms of translocal collaboration through working with the soil.

VIOLA SCHREER (Brunel University London) & ANU LOUNELA (University of Helsinki)*SPIRITS AS COMPANIONS IN GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM: EXPLORING NGAJU DAYAK RELIGIOUS RESPONSES TO FRONTIERISATION IN CENTRAL KALIMANTAN, INDONESIA*

This paper discusses the role of spirits in Ngaju Dayak grassroots activism in the context of frontierisation processes in Central Kalimantan, Indonesian Borneo. Frontier dynamics dissolve social orders and socionatural landscapes at an accelerating pace, as state and corporate large-scale projects create overlapping territorial zones and new social orders. In Central Kalimantan, as elsewhere in Southeast Asia, grassroots activists' responses to these endeavours of state formation and the associated large-scale socio-ecological changes are taking different forms. In recent years, for example, both villagers and activist groups draw on an indigenous religious practice known as hinting pali to negotiate conflicts with palm oil and timber companies. In light of this, we ask, why and how do different Ngaju Dayak actors employ this religious practice to express their grievances? And, further, how and why are religious practices, such as hinting pali contested as a religious response to dispossession?

Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in different locations and online sources from across Central Kalimantan, we explore various reasons and ways in which hinting pali is practiced to highlight the fragmented and at times contested nature of grassroots activism in frontier situations. As we show, the increasing use of hinting pali has, on the one hand, led to the bureaucratisation of the ritual itself through a legalised customary institution, but on the other hand, it has also provoked rejection from religious authorities who criticise the instrumentalisation of hinting pali for political purposes. This friction shows how religious practices are mobilised in multiple and contested ways. Given the politico-religious complexities of Ngaju Dayak grassroots activism, we suggest treating “spirits as informants” (Bubandt 2009) both in a methodological and political sense, arguing that spirits are actors not just to confront various forms of dispossession, but to negotiate political-economic and ethno-religious entitlements more generally.

DARMANTO (Czech Academy of Sciences) & RINI ASTUTI (ANU)

DIVERSE POLITICAL RESPONSES TO ECOLOGICAL RUPTURES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOW-CARBON SUBJECTIVITIES AMONG INDONESIAN YOUNG FARMERS: INSIGHTS FROM JAMBI PROVINCE, INDONESIA

This paper examines young farmers’ political responses to massive ecological deterioration and agrarian crises in Jambi province, in the outer islands of Indonesia. Drawing from two case studies, we compare young farmers’ distinct strategies in developing low-carbon subjectivities in two rural landscapes with different agrarian settings and histories. In Bungo district, young farmers deeply believe that illegal logging is one of the major reasons for ecological ruptures. They participate in the management of village forest, pursuing to preserve forest and improving community livelihood through a state-backed customary-based social forestry scheme. Farmers align with conservation NGOs, state bureaucracy, and market based conservation agendas. Meanwhile, in Tebo District, young farmers identify environmental transformation as a structural and historical problem, linked to extractive governmental regime. Connecting to, and creating networks with, the national and transnational peasant movements, they develop an alternative concept and praxis of agroecology while fighting for land tenure security. We argue that the distinct articulation of, and political responses to, ecological and agrarian crises in our two case studies - whereby Bungo farmers occupy customary identity and practices, while Tebo farmers align with transnational peasant movements - are shaped by the combination of particular landscape’s relational history, agrarian structure, and on-going social reproduction. We contend that the difference in young farmers’ political responses reflects the historically sedimented agrarian relations in Indonesia and illustrates how contemporary low-carbon subjectivities are continually being shaped by the contested imagined Indonesian agrarian society: either as a socially stable and culturally distinct customary community or as a political and democratic peasantry.

10.30-11.00 **COFFEE BREAK**

11.00-13.00 **PANEL 3: ACTIVISM’S HISTORICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL ENTANGLEMENTS**

GUEST CHAIR: CHRIS CHAPLIN (LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS)

TIMO KAARTINEN (University of Helsinki)

SALVAGE BOTANY IN THE OIL PALM AND CONSERVATION LANDSCAPES OF WEST KALIMANTAN

The paper is concerned with the interest that the inhabitants of extraction/conservation landscapes show towards plants as natural species and commodities. Drawing from fieldwork in West Kalimantan (Indonesia), I ask what ideologies of scale are revealed by people’s interactions with plants. I compare conservation and oil palm estates as two global frameworks for imagining the meaning and value of plants and explore how local people respond to these seemingly inevitable transformations of their environment. One response found in both conservation and oil palm frontiers is “salvage botany”, a practice of transplanting forest shrubs and trees onto land that has been cleared for cultivation or settlement. I argue that naming these plants and placing them in a human-made landscape are part of generating a provincial perspective towards the problem spaces of Capitalism and the Anthropocene, inspired by globally promoted models of land-use but diverging from them in important ways.

ALEXANDER CULLEN (University of Cambridge)

GOVERNING CLIMATE ACROSS ONTOLOGICAL AND ECO-LOGICAL FRICTIONS IN TIMOR-LESTE

While the necessity of global climate action increases starkly every year, how such knowledge is sensed and mobilised in customary or indigenous landscapes is rarely given adequate attention by NGOs or the state. Resultingly, site-based mitigation or adaptation processes may manifest unintended, (and often impactful), outcomes. Such risks are heightened in post-conflict spaces of institutional uncertainty and epistemological flux. This paper therefore stresses the importance of examining negotiations of ontological difference through which climate governance is refracted between localised customary and formal institutions. This is done by scrutinizing the superficiality of climate discourse at the governance interface in rural south coast Timor-Leste. Here, failures to consider complex customary epistemologies and residual socio-political relations to land has produced conceptual ambivalence and serious local environmental conflict.

COLUM GRAHAM (Australian National University)

FERTILISING RESENTMENT: FARMER CARDS, THE STATE, AND MAFIA IN RURAL JAVA (ONLINE)

Particularly since the Suharto era, the Indonesian state has provisioned enormous funding for fertilizer. While the input has long been a source of illicit finance, nowadays cases of corruption in subsidized fertilizer distribution more often appear in national and local news. To address such problems, the national government involved the state's security apparatus to monitor disbursement as well as implemented a farmer card program from 2017 to make sure fertilizer can be bought by those eligible at set prices. But the state's farmer card solution has achieved little to no success in Lone Teak, a village in East Java where I have conducted long-term fieldwork, because the program does not address longstanding distributive practices. Small-scale farmers there continue to deal with marked up prices for heavily used subsidized chemical fertilizer, particularly urea, with the least able to afford to pay more forced to do so. Immediately responsible for chemical fertilizer price hikes is a fertilizer 'mafia', made up of officials and the village's "aborted bourgeoisie" that are in position to overcome shortages created by regency-level misallocation and ensure supply. The power of the mafia ensures both the village's small-scale farmers air antagonism about fertilizer towards the government in amorphous terms rather than expose wrongdoing directly, and that officials in higher levels of government have little will to act against them. The purpose of the farmer card, then, reflects a makeshift attempt from populists to address concerns in the media and from international development organisations about the state subsidizing corruption without seriously addressing how the rackets work. To do so would undermine necessary support from elites profiting from the long-term status quo in the countryside, but at the same time not doing so fertilizes resentment among the rural "hidden force". Meanwhile, tonnes of state funded organic fertilizer that smallholders judge useless for production lay on pallets as part of the same assemblage of fictive accounting practices and as artefacts of misplaced expectations. A positive ecological imaginary can also be an exploitable resource.

SINWA NAW (Sophia University Tokyo)

NATURE, NATION, AND IDENTITY: GRASSROOTS POLITICAL ACTIVISM THROUGH A FUSION OF ECOLOGY AND ETHNONATIONALISM (ONLINE)

A complex fusion of agrarian justice, ecological degradation and ethnonationalism has become an emerging political ground for grassroot political response and movements against development and conservation projects and authoritarian resource governance in the Kachin region of Myanmar. The chronic armed conflict and political crisis of Myanmar have become more intertwined with increased of infrastructure projects, national conservation plans, agribusiness (monocultured banana plantations) and extractive industries (jade, gold, rare-earth) as Myanmar's linkage with global economy rises. The grassroot communities have endured multiple resource grabbing and adverse impacts of environmental degradation. The conservation and development projects not only delimit their fundamental right of access to resources and preserving their identity but also challenge their conventional perception of ethnonationalism. The compounding land and resource conflict have pushed the rural agrarian communities to activate their political responses to confront both the state and mainstream ethnonationalists in recent years. The grassroot political activism has embraced ecology and nationalism as a strategy to counter state's control and environmental degradation. This paper looks at how grassroot political responses of civil society groups and local communities are allying with/ confronting against the ethnonationalist movements in Myanmar and how redefining mainstream ethnonationalism and protecting ecology have become a strategic fusion to resist state institutions, development schemes and global conservation projects.

13.00–14.00

LUNCH BREAK

14.00–15.30

SATURNINO (JUN) BORRAS (ISS, TNI)

KEY NOTE 2: SCHOLAR-ACTIVISM AND AGRARIAN STRUGGLES

16.15–17.45

AFTERNOON ACTIVITY

*WALKING TOUR OF THE CITY CENTRE WITH UNCOMFORTABLE CAMBRIDGE.
MEET OUTSIDE KING'S COLLEGE. GOOD SHOES AND PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED!*

19.00

CONFERENCE DINNER

THE OLD LIBRARY, SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE

DAY 3

20 April, 2023

8.30–10.30

**PANEL 4: AGRARIAN TRANSITIONS AND ANTHROPOCENIC FUTURES
ACROSS DIFFERENT SCALES**

GUEST CHAIR: JONATHAN RIGG (UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL)

FAHMI RIZKI FAHROJI (Glasgow University)

FOR THE SAKE OF ADAT: MINING, ECOLOGY, AND INDIGENOUS ACTIVISM

This study interrogates the resurgence of indigenous activism against the effect of mining extraction on local livelihoods and landscapes in Indonesia. Although the state struggles to fuel development by mining the underground, this amplifies the precariousness of liveable things, leaving questions of what the future holds for the many massive and widespread indigenous existence in the frontier: their effects on local livelihoods, landscape, and adat (customary law). Indigenous communities have reasserted their representation through state-subject as 'practices of representation' where they incorporate into representing long-sedimented local identities and practices in broader and current dominant socio-political settings. This study will scrutinise these questions among the Dayak Meratus community in Borneo amidst its activism, where the form of identity and political positioning of marginalised local communities in the state's hegemonic imposition and growing indigenous movements is disputed. Using Hall's (1997) concept of a regime of representation, this analysis will delve deeper into how organisationalising local communities make the practice of representation and constituting an indigenous environmental movement. This study draws inspiration from literature on the anticipated, planned for, and unexpected futures of Anthropocene. This project makes a case for the analysis of the future imaginaries of indigenous activism as the Dayak Meratus community formulates new 'self-representation' and 'life-worlds,' dwelling with dominant power and changing ecologies.

ANDREA PIA (London School of Economics)

JUSTICE AT THE END OF CARBON? CHINESE SUSTAINABILITY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

China's presence in the infrastructural development of Southeast Asia (SEA) is growing amidst international preoccupations over the region's political stability. Instability is increasingly likely under ever-growing market pressure on local natural resources (Welker 2012, Li 2015) and the looming threats of climate breakdown (Schuler 2014). While historically a terrain of well-meaning cooperation across the ethnically checkered and ecologically rich landscape of SEA, transboundary water management and hydropower have recently made headlines as both a key site for carbon-neutral growth and a driver of agrarian conflict (Molle, Foran, Kakonen 2010; Biba 2020). While Chinese hydropower companies officially pursue the energy transition in SEA to the benefit of the whole region, China-led water development is still differentially impacting indigenous and peasant communities through forced relocation and livelihood change (Chellaney 2011, 2013; Biba 2016). By analysing a series of oral histories about grassroots engagement with and resistance against Chinese hydropower projects collected during online interviews with key stakeholders in the SEA water sector (indigenous and climate activists, conservationists, and NGO practitioners), this presentation investigates questions of grassroots politics and agrarian transition in the region. It asks: what is the fate of SEA's riverine communities as water development projects displace and dispossess residents to generate green energy and new economic opportunities? On what varying intellectual, economic, and ethical grounds are current China-led water development projects in SEA pursued and/or fought against? Whose future does get counted in, and whose present counted out, by Chinese transboundary water management? Can sustainability transitions be just?

JACK JENKINS HILL (University College London)

CONSERVATION IS OUR REVOLUTION". RECALIBRATING TERRITORIAL, CULTURAL AND ECOLOGICAL FUTURES IN SOUTHERN MYANMAR (ONLINE)

Tanintharyi Region, a forested landscape in southern Myanmar, had long been a site of conflict, extraction, and revolution. Following the 2012 ceasefire, a period that would become a ten-year interlude in what had been a seventy-year long armed conflict, a new set of frictions between agribusiness and mining companies, ethnic resistance organisations, indigenous communities, and conservation organisations started to emerge, suspending the landscape in a new set of protracted conflicts. Opening up new spaces of resistance, indigenous communities, civil society organizations, and revolutionaries invoked conservation as a practice that would combine ideas of national, environmental and cultural sustenance and sovereignty, forging an indigenous cosmology that would transform land, forests, wildlife and people into a Karen homeland.

Understanding revolution as set of processes that seeks to transform and recalibrate worlds, temporalities, ecologies, persons (Cherstitch et.al, 2020), in this paper I place ideas of revolution in conversation with conceptions of conservation. I look at the ways in which local and international practices of conservation in Tanintharyi Region are situated within contrasting cosmologies of revolution, and question whether conservation itself, rather than a practice of keeping things the way they are, can be considered a practice of social, political and ecological transformation. Finally, I also question whether ideas of revolutionary conservation in a context of rapacious ecological collapse can help us in thinking through ways of reimagining and remaking our planet in the midst of the Anthropocene.

LAUR KIIK (University of Tokyo)

BETWEEN FARMERS AND THE PLANET: HOW RELIGIOUS AND NATIONALIST ENVIRONMENTALISM SHAPES THE KACHIN ANTHROPOCENE (ONLINE)

Who is there between poor farmers and the Anthropocene? Drawing on ethnographic field research in the Burma-China borderlands since 2010, the presentation explores how the Kachin ethno-national movement and Christian religious institutions have adopted and driven environmentalism and land rights activism. They have done so amid decades of the slow Burmese war, to resist vast Chinese, Burmese, and Kachin grabbing of farmland and of billions worth of natural resources (jade, rare earths, gold, amber, rainforest, cash crops, mega-dams). The Kachin Anthropocene shows how deeply nations and religions can shape the middle ground that connects the farmers' struggles for land with the human ruination of planet Earth. This middle ground has both ridges and faults. In such cases across the world, at stake is the divine motherland, not Mother Earth.

10.30-11.00 **COFFEE BREAK**

11.00-12.30 **ROUNTABLE DISCUSSION**

12.30-13.00 **FINAL REFLECTIONS AND GOOD-BYE**

13.00 **LUNCH**

This workshop was organized by the Global Lives of the Orangutan project, which has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (Grant agreement No. StG 758494). We are grateful to all our participants, Candie Furber, St Catharine's College, Sidney Sussex College, the Department of Social Anthropology in Cambridge and Brunel University London for their support.

