

Proposal for a panel at EuroSEAS 2019

Dynamic ontologies in dynamic landscapes

The ontological turn has challenged naturalist research paradigms, including political ecology, and forced researchers to consider and to look into completely different worldviews. These ontologies, however, have often been described as static and the aspect of change has been side-lined. Southeast Asia has seen strong changes in the physical landscape resulting from logging, expansion of plantations, mining, as well as from processes of migration and concentration of humans amongst others. Consequently, political ecology has thoroughly researched these processes of change. The changes in ontologies are far less visible than these physical transformations. Therefore, this panel wants to take up the challenge of discussing how these changes in the physical landscape and other related processes affect and interact with ontologies of different societies. With studies from various geographical areas within Southeast Asia, the presenters will discuss the following questions: How do ontologies interplay with changing physical landscapes over time? How do people maintain and renegotiate their relationships with the non-human world under change? The panel addresses these interplays between dynamic ontologies and so-called natural as well as so-called urban landscapes.

Convener: Annina Aeberli, Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Bern,
annina.aeberli@graduateinstitute.ch

Single session