

Panel proposal for EuroSEAS 2019

Title: Grounding “alternative ontologies”: towards a political ecology of animism

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Description: Our panel seeks to bring into dialogue two popular approaches in Southeast Asian studies which do not talk much to one another, at least conceptually: materialist-oriented political ecology and, recently blooming, “new animist” studies focusing more on ontological approaches. Such a dialogue is all the more necessary for its potential to turn into a powerful conversation on a common denominator of both approaches: a more or less explicit concern with the disruptive implications of capitalist modernization and alternatives to it. We invite contributions which further the discourse on how “animism” can be cast in political ecological terms with regard to Southeast Asia. Papers may be empirical and/or conceptual in nature but should *explicitly* address the political-economic implications of animism; they might choose to deal with the following questions:

- How do recent studies on animism in Southeast Asia fit into a political-ecological, historical-materialist frame of reference? E.g.: How do alternative ontological concepts of the environment relate to issues of enclosure, primitive accumulation, resettlement, migration, urbanization, commodification or class struggle?
- How are Southeast Asian animisms *actively* involved in processes of “modernization”? How do they further – or undermine – specific hegemonic projects?
- Are there potential alternative trajectories, or “concrete utopias”, arising from an integration of both perspectives, e.g. when looking at a specific empirical case, or by comparison?

An outcome of this panel should be a joint publication as special journal issue or anthology.

Single session