

Reading Group: Sovereignty, Governance and Environment

Where:

Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit, Mond Seminar Room, New Museums Site, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RF.

When:

Michaelmas, Lent and Easter Terms 2019/20

Beginning on Thursday 14th November 2019 (17:00 – 18:00)

Convenor:

Dr Joseph Bristley jb2329@cam.ac.uk

Two political issues loom large in today's world. One is a transnationally voiced concern with environmental degradation, global warming and other manifestations of a deepening climate crisis. A second is an increasing valorization of the concept of sovereignty, and its mobilization to assert ideals of national self-sufficiency and independence of action. This reading group aims to interrogate new forms, notions and practices of sovereignty and governance emerging alongside the widespread adoption of international principles of environmental regulation (eg: *Paris 2015*). But rather than treat such processes as manifestations of an emerging global legal order or 'nomos of the Earth' (Schmitt 2003 [1950]), we interrogate how such adoptions may be grounded, inflected and modified through their emplacement in local hierarchies, power structures and systems of knowledge.

The 'Sovereignty, Governance and Environment' reading group interrogates these trends through the framework of six broad categories with an interdisciplinary appeal: Order, Sovereignty, Authority, (Il)legality, the Anthropocene, and Climate Justice. Readings include classic theoretical texts, and ethnographies (with a special emphasis on material from Mongolia). Two sessions will be held each term. The reading group is open to established scholars, new scholars and post-graduate students. Aside from discussing these readings, we welcome the inclusion and discussion of any papers members would like to propose and/or present themselves.

Session 1 – Order

Date: 14 November 2019 (17:00 – 18:00)

Karl Schmitt. 2003 [1950]. *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of Jus Publicum Europaeum*. New York: Telos Publishing Press. [pp 67 – 78]

Jerome Whittington. 2016. 'What Does Climate Change Demand of Anthropology?' *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 39(1): 7-15.

Session 2 - Sovereignty

Date: 28 November 2019 (17:00 – 18:00)

Giorgio Agamben. 1998. *Homo Sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. [39 – 48].

Franck Billé. 2017. 'Introduction: Speaking Volumes.' *Theorizing the Contemporary, Fieldsights*, October 24. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/introduction-speaking-volumes/>

Session 3 – Authority

Date: TBC (Lent Term)

Caroline Humphrey. 1997. 'Exemplars and rules: aspects of the discourse of moralities in Mongolia'. In Signe Howell (ed.) *The Ethnography of Moralities*, London: Routledge. Pp 25-47.

David Sneath. 2018. 'Commonwealth, inalienable possessions, and the res publica: The anthropology of aristocratic order and the landed estate'. *History and Anthropology*, 29:3, pp 324-341

Session 4 – (Il)legality

Date: TBC (Lent Term)

Jacques Derrida. 2010 [1989]. 'The Force of Law: The "Mystical Foundations of Authority."' In Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion*. London: Routledge (pp198-228).

Mette High. 2012. 'The Cultural Logics of Illegality: Living Outside the Law in the Mongolian Gold Mines' in Julian Dierkes (ed.), *Change in Democratic Mongolia: Social Relations, Health, Mobile Pastoralism, and Mining*. Brill: Brill Inner Asian Library (pp. 249-270).

Session 5 - The Anthropocene

Date: TBC (Easter Term)

Dipesh Chakrabarty. 2009. 'The Climate of History: Four Theses'. *Critical Inquiry* 35: 197 – 222. [pp 212- 220]

Jonathan Verschuuren. 2017. 'Chapter 1 - The Role of Sustainable Development and the Associated Principles of Environmental Law and Governance' in Louis Kotzé (ed) *Environmental Law and Governance for the Anthropocene*. London: Hart Publishing.

Session 6 - Climate justice

Date: TBC (Easter Term)

Barbara Bodenhorn and Olga Ulturgasheva. 2017 Climate strategies: thinking through Arctic examples. *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. A* 375: 20160363. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rsta.2016.0363>

Andrei Marin. 2019. 'Volatility: Understanding Global Capitalism and Climate Change Vulnerability in Mongolia. A. Stensrud and T. Hylland Eriksen (eds) *Climate, Capitalism and Communities*. Pluto Press. (pp 76 – 96)
