



Zürcher Humangeographisches Kolloquium

The «Zürcher Humangeographische Kolloquium» is jointly organised by the four units of Human Geography, Political Geography, Economic Geography and Space & Organization at the Department of Geography, Zurich University. All interested are cordially invited.

Tuesday 8 December 2015, 16:00 – 17:00

University of Zurich-Irchel, Winterthurerstrasse 190, Y 15 G 91

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Frontier assemblages: The political economy of resource frontiers and political borders in Southeast Asia

The past decade has seen a radical and unprecedented transformation in the borderlands of Southeast Asia. Millions of acres of land have been rapidly converted to large-scale, plantation-based monoculture. These transformations have dramatic implications for the sovereignty, security and political economy of the states in question and for the people who live in these rapidly transforming borderlands. This lecture interrogates the contemporary expansion of so-called resource frontiers into borderland spaces. It focuses on the interactions between new strategies of capital accumulation and extraction, govern-

mental strategies of liberalization and securitization. This lecture discusses how these zones of political anxiety and instability are often vividly imagined but poorly understood by those who govern them. Their reframing as resource frontiers heralds a new wave of interventions within them. Through the case of the Indonesian borderlands the lecture illustrates how large-scale palm oil plantation expansion fuelled by Malaysian and Singaporean capital intersect with projects of national security, sovereignty and state building.



Michael Eilenberg is Associate Professor in Anthropology at Aarhus University. He works on issues of state formation, sovereignty, autonomy, and agrarian expansion in frontier regions of Southeast Asia with a special focus on the borderlands of Indonesia and Malaysia. His book, *At the Edges of States* published by KITLV Press and Brill Academic Publishers (2012) is dealing with the dynamics of state formation in Southeast Asian borderlands.