

Editorial: Entangled Areas

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Abstract

The following editorial reflects on the thematic collection *Entangled Areas: Reactivating Southeast Asia in the Anthropocene* carefully curated by the collection's editors—Casper Bruun Jensen and Fadjar Ibnu Thufail. Twenty authors write across twelve *Engagements* including a preface by the thematic collection editors to consider area as an entangled with perspectives from Southeast Asia. In addition to this thematic collection, we also present the original research article of Matthias Leese entitled “Adding Government to Proof.”

Keywords

Anthropocene; area; entanglements; Southeast Asia; STS; proof; police

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Introduction

The penultimate issue of our editorial tenure and volume 11 feature the thematic collection, *Entangled Areas: Reactivating Southeast Asia in the Anthropocene*. Along with the thematic collection is the original research article “Adding Government to Proof” by Matthias Leese (2025). Leese focuses on the police report as the data object by which to expand upon the concepts of proof and good government.

Editors Casper Bruun Jensen and Fadjar Ibnu Thufail (2025) put disasters of the Anthropocene in the Southeast Asian region in dialogue with the STS analytic of “entanglement,” proposing that doing so will entail a deep rethinking of the notion of “area” that has been foundational to various area studies disciplines.

Contributions to the collection are wide ranging in terms of their geographic, empirical, foci and methodological approaches. In the collection, Zahirah S., Joseph R. Klein, Gillian Bogart, Kirsten Keller, Wayne Huang, and Kathleen Cruz Gutierrez (2025) collectively consider “Coastlines in Motion” going beyond presumed stable borders, to consider multiple sites—the “nickel mining and land reclamation in South Sulawesi, a rubble causeway across the Johor Straits, sediment isolation in Timor, and vertical sediment compaction on Jakartan coasts” (*ibid.*, 21). They do so, in order to show the emergence of “area” as a consequence of the accelerant of the disastrous Anthropocene.

The imaginary of the floating city is easily graspable in architectural plans, but with little thought to the ways these imaginaries can be exclusionary and something to contend with in urban planning. Rapti Siriwardane-de Zoysa and Muhammad Soufi Cahya Gemilang (2025) focus on amphibious architectural imaginaries and actualities in Southeast Asia(s) taking note of photography as a way of showing this contrast in practice. Irina Rafliana (2025), considers tsunamis as method for reconfiguring areas, particularly focusing on the Red Zone in South Pagai Island, the coastline of Jawa, as configured by the German Indonesian Tsunami Early Warning System Project (GITEWS).

Jakkrit Sangkhamanee’s (2025) contribution revisits a remote yet critical zone within Southeast Asia under Anthropocene conditions, with particular focus on air pollution. In doing so, Sangkhamanee traces new ecological lines in a tender explication of capitalism and territory. Fathun Karib and Dana Listiana (2025) ask the deceptively short question “can the geo speak?” thinking about Southeast Asia. Their work engages with the geological development of the British, Dutch, and American Empires in Southeast Asia giving the reader an alternative way to rethink the future of Southeast Asian studies, which is no mean feat!

Kristian Karlo Saguin (2025) in “Urban Areas as Entangled Areas in Southeast Asia” considers the periphery, as a critical spatial category to unpack an urban site, and in this case, Manila’s rural landscapes and urban dwelling “dissolve” into one another. In his work “Unsettled Area: Popular Territories of Blackness,” AbdouMaliq Simone delves into how particular understandings of Blackness inform and animate the everyday practices that shape urban and social territories (2025). Simone positions Blackness as more than identity and social category: as a methodological lens uniquely capable of grasping the layered, often contradictory ontologies of constantly shifting terrains from Brazil to Indonesia to Nigeria.

Jenna Grant (2025) calls forth regional resistance in her contribution about the threat of drug-resistant malaria emerging in Asia, by questioning the making and doing of a region, around the scientific conceptions of the “Greater Mekong subregion.” Jiraporn Laocharoenwong’s engagement is food for thought (2025), by rethinking area through the cross-border cattle trade across the Myanmar-Thailand border from field to truck to plate explored through the intertwined practices of feeding, medicating, transporting and

consuming. Thufail's engagement (2025) is a favorite of our Managing Editor for its stinkingly-great title—"Manifesto of the Durian!" Thufail combines smell and area studies in a compelling format. Smell on! Thongchai Winichakul's afterword (2025) provides the reader with a meditation on regions, as the final words on Southeast Asia as an entangled area, moving from resisting regional consistency to how the writers of this thematic collection have brought awareness to new agendas, issues, methodologies, and concepts of transregional complexity.

Taken together, the contributions signal the possibility of a renewed and productive dialogue between STS and various area studies fields. They also exemplify our editorial emphasis on transnationalism and the need for enriched place-based analysis.

Happy stinky reading!

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