



Lecture Series in Social Anthropology

Spring
Semester
2025

Tuesday 11 March 2025 | 4.15 p.m. | Room AND-4-06

Embodied Hope: Permaculture Youth Camps and the Affective Mobilization of Aspirational Futures

Prof. Thomas Stodulka (Universität Münster)

Permaculture youth camps in Timor-Leste cultivate hope as a practice grounded in collaborative learning and community-led ecological restoration. Rather than imposing external solutions, these camps respond to existential concerns raised by local communities, turning sites of crisis into spaces of potential. Drawing on affect theory and ecological pedagogy, this talk examines how the *juventude permakultura* movement mobilizes participants through embodied, sensory-based learning.

By integrating community concerns into camp activities—such as revitalizing water sources, restoring degraded land, and reconstructing social spaces—permaculture facilitators foster a pedagogy of hope that resists co-optation by political or corporate agendas. The camping sites generate affective atmospheres that inspire long-term commitment to ecological care, as participants engage in hands-on, collective problem-solving rather than passive instruction. This immersive approach sustains hope beyond the temporal boundaries of the camp sites, shaping future leaders in permaculture and food sovereignty.

In theorizing these camps as affective and aspirational spaces, I argue that hope materializes not as abstract optimism but through sustained engagement with land, labor, and learning. The *juventude permakultura* movement exemplifies an alternative model of eco-social mobilization—one rooted in reciprocity, shared experience, and the tactile practice of imagining and building more livable futures.

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