Book Discussion: Jonathan Saha's 'Colonizing Animals' - 2pm GMT, 17th March 2022

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2PM GMT, 17TH MARCH 2022 - COLONIZING ANIMALS - A CONVERSATION WITH DR JONATHAN SAHA

Registration at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6w9AN4P1RXqOCIQPUDljv

What was the impact of British imperialism on Myanmar’s animals? And how does our understanding of colonialism change if we understand empire as an interspecies enterprise?

In his recent book, Colonizing Animals: Interspecies Empire in Myanmar, former ISRF Fellow Dr Jonathan Saha explores how the lives of animals were irrevocably changed by British imperialism in Myanmar, while also showing how the colonial project was dependent on nonhuman creatures. Elephants in their thousands were enlisted as labour into the timber industry. Several million cattle migrated to the deltaic rice frontier to provide plough power. Wildlife was decimated in many parts of the colony through imperial activities. Animals were also an ideological battle ground. Imperial authors viewed Burmese relationships with animals as overly sympathetic and as proof of backwardness. Anti-colonial nationalists mobilised animals as symbols in their struggles against imperialism.

Focussing particularly on the changing relationships between subaltern peoples and colonised animals, Dr Saha offers a highly innovative perspective on Myanmar’s colonial past and the transformations wrought by British imperialism – one particularly attentive to racial divisions and the rise of capitalism.

Jonathan Saha will offer an overview of his research for this book, with responses from two experts on the topic: Heeral Chhabra, PhD Candidate in History, University of Delhi; and Nicolo Ludovice, a historian of animals, food and health, and Lecturer in the Department of History at the University of Hong Kong. Your questions and a discussion will follow, moderated by Professor Christopher Newfield, ISRF Director of Research. All are welcome, both to attend and to participate.

Register to attend at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6w9AN4P1RXqOCIQPUDljv.