International Symposium
(In Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Mongolia-UK Diplomatic Relations)

Geopolitics and Geoeconomics of Mongolia's Natural Resource Strategy

19–20 March 2013

Chadwick Room, Selwyn College, University of Cambridge

A Cambridge HEIF5 project on Mongolia’s mining strategy
Organised by the Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit (MIASU), Cambridge
Supported by:
Mongolian Embassy in the United Kingdom, JPMCM & Rio Tinto
Summary

On 7 November 2011, The Guardian declared Mongolia to be fast becoming ‘the centre of the planet’s greatest resource boom ... on the brink of one of the most dramatic transformations in human history’. This symposium takes up this prediction by closely examining the social, political, and above all geopolitical and geoeconomic factors that may propel or hamper Mongolia’s transformation from a pastoral economy to a mineral resource-based industrial society. Leading experts from Mongolia proper, its two territorial neighbours – China and Russia, and its ‘third neighbours’ – Japan, UK and continental Europe, will spend two days scrutinising a variety of topics ranging from the mineral trade to transnational traffic, from practices of financing mineral industry to infrastructural development, from resource depletion to geopolitical strategy, and many more. Combining insights from front-line businessmen and politicians, and in-depth academic analysis, this symposium aims to navigate competing international interests in exploiting Mongolia’s natural resources, and to provide different perspectives on Mongolia’s strategic culture in business and politics.

The symposium also hosts a special panel and gala reception to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Mongolia-UK relations. The UK was the first Western country to establish diplomatic relations in 1963 and it is now Europe’s biggest business partner with Mongolia.
Opening Speech:

Caroline Humphrey, Emeritus Sigrid Rausing Professor of Collaborative Anthropology, University of Cambridge

Panel 1: Mongolia’s Natural Resource Strategy: Geopolitical and Geoeconomic Perspectives (Part I)

Chair: Uradyn E. Bulag, Reader in Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge

- D. Galsandorj, President, Mongolian Exporters’ Association, Mongolia
  
  *Mongolia’s mineral products and issues of international trade*

- D. Enkhjargal, Former Deputy Governor, Bank of Mongolia; Chief Representative, London Office, Bank of Mongolia
  
  *Financing Mongolia’s mineral growth*

Coffee/tea break 11.00–11.15

- D. Shurkhuu, Deputy Director, Institute of International Studies, Mongolian Academy of Sciences
  
  *The enlargement of Mongolian railway networks and the collision of commercial and geopolitical interests*

- Nasan Bayar, President, School of Ethnology and Sociology, Inner Mongolia University, China
  
  *Nation-building, ethnicity and natural resources: The perspective of an Inner Mongolian coal truck driver across the China–Mongolia border*

Lunch: 12.45–13.45
Afternoon: 14.00–17.30

Panel 2: Mongolia’s Natural Resource Strategy:
International Geopolitical and Geoeconomic Perspectives (Part II)

Chair: Caroline Humphrey, Emeritus Sigrid Rausing Professor of Collaborative Anthropology, University of Cambridge

- Vladimir Viktorovich Graivoronsky, Head of the Mongolia Study Unit, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences
  
  Russia’s role in the exploration and development of the natural resources of contemporary Mongolia

- Burensain Borjigin, Associate Professor of History, School of Human Cultures, the University of Shiga Prefecture, Japan

  Resource depletion in China and its implication for Mongolia: Frontier and historical perspectives

Coffee/Tea break 15.30–15.45

- Ippei Shimamura, Lecturer in Cultural Anthropology, School of Human Cultures, the University of Shiga Prefecture, Japan

  Ancestral spirits love mining sites: Shamanic activities around the coal and gold mining sites in Mongolia

- Caroline Upton, Lecturer in Human Geography, University of Leicester

  Communities, culture and commodification: Mongolia’s new resource politics

Dinner for speakers and panellists: 19.30 – 21.00
Wednesday 20 March 2013

Morning: 9.30–12.45

Panel 3: The Culture and Politics of Mongolia’s New Resource Development

Chair: Hildegard Diemberger, Director of MIASU, University of Cambridge

- Pippa Howard, Director, Business & Biodiversity, Fauna & Flora International
  
  Transformational change in the South Gobi: Oyu Tolgoi and the role of multi-stakeholder approach to protecting biodiversity

- Rebecca Empson, Lecturer in Social Anthropology, University College London, & Tristan Webb, Research Analyst, Asia-Pacific Research Group, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
  
  What does the ‘wolf economy’ look like? Loans, minerals and trusting partnerships in Mongolia

Coffee/tea break 11.00–11.15

- Kunioki Homma, President & CEO, South Gobi Power Development Corporation,
  
  Japanese involvement in Mongolian economy, resource extraction and infrastructure development: from the past government ODA to the new private investment

- Morten Pedersen, Associate Professor in Social Anthropology, University of Copenhagen
  
  Chinese resource extraction in Mongolia: Anthropological perspectives

Lunch: 12.45–13.45
Panel 4: The 50th Anniversary of Mongolia–UK Diplomatic Relations 14.00–15.30
(Sponsored by the Mongolian Embassy in London, Rio Tinto, and MIASU Cambridge)

Chair: Ganbold Gonchig, Counsellor (Political Affairs), Embassy of Mongolia to the United Kingdom

Keynote Speech: N. Bataa, Chargé d’affaires, Embassy of Mongolia

50 years of Mongolia–UK diplomatic relations

Speakers:
R. Amarjargal, MP, Former Prime Minister of Mongolia
Robert Court, Global Head of External Affairs, Rio Tinto
B. Enkhtuvshin, President, Mongolian Academy of Sciences
John Grogan, Chairman of the Mongolian British Chamber of Commerce, UK
Sir Paul Judge, Key benefactor of Cambridge Judge Business School
Ann Puntis, Chief Executive of University of Cambridge International Examinations
Alan Sanders, Independent scholar, UK

Coffee/tea break 15.30–15.45

Panel 5. Roundtable Discussion: 15.45 – 18.00
Mongolia’s Resource Cosmopolitanism vs. Resource Nationalism

Chair: David Sneath, Reader in Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge

Panellists:
R. Amarjargal
P.B. Anand
Robert Court
D. Enkhjargal
Rebecca Empson
D. Galsandorj
Vladimir V. Graivoronsky
John Grogan
Caroline Humphrey
Pippa Howard
Paul Judge
Homma Kunioki
Nasan Bayar
Morten Pedersen
Ann Puntis
D. Shurkhuu
Caroline Upton

Reception: 18.30 – 20.30

(Hosted by the Mongolian Embassy in the UK and MIASU Cambridge)