
[unintelligible sound]

[beep]

Log no. 00

Here, recording myself and transmitting this audio of my thoughts from the latest coordinate in the Oort Cloud.

Speaking here, Serambi Fati. Indonesian astrobiologist and xeno-anthropologist. In the mission to observe the superhabitable planet in Cygnus constellation: Bumi 5.0.

[beep]

I don't know who will listen to this transmission... it could have been accidentally sent to the past because of the radiation from the cosmic microwave background.

But if you listen to this: we are in the year 2677 B.E. and as you might be aware of... the earth is doomed and we are in the mission to relocate the earth population to our new home.

A tropical planet with organisms similar to us, bipedal and mammals. Actually similar to people from tropical regions in the 8th and 9th centuries. So far, we cannot identify if they have any advanced technology, let alone considered as having capability of mastering energy in the sense of the Kardashev scale.

What we know is that the Bumi culture and social life resembles the pre-colonial indigenous hill people in the tropical region, especially those in Southeast Asia.

[beep]

I am aware that this is a colonial project.

But... we are desperate.

We know that 99.9% of any species that ever existed before us is extinct.

But when it comes to us we try everything to survive.

Instead of gold, glory, gospel of European colonialism, we come to Bumi 5.0 with the promise of co-existence.

[beep]

It's an anarchist society, a stateless planet.

But, I have my own doubt as well.

This theory from Professor Virada about Buminites seems true: Bumi societies might be sociological axolotls, incapable of reaching the normal adult state without external aid.

[beep]

The Central Government announces that in order to achieve co-existence, we should offer our great technology to this 8th century tropical society.

What I have been thinking is, we should not rely too much on our technological advancement for diplomatic relations.

But we should look inward to our species, to look backward.

It's not that our future can be different by venturing this colonial project of tropical futurism, but our past can be different too.

[beep]

Humans on Earth always come up with different ideas of the future based on the certain kind of universality, of time advancement and evolution.

We never come up with different ideas of the past, we always see the past from the perspectives of memory and history.

[beep]

[sigh]

What am I doing? What do I know?

[beep]

[silent]

[beep]

Log no. 138

Prediction.

My project in Bumi is to have a mutual conversation of this theory that I develop while observing the speculative and potential socio-culturality of Bumi society based on its planet's chemical and physical quantification data.

[beep]

I speculate that the Buminites have a sharing system.

Theory of communing process.

A 'commoning process' which illustrates a form of social organisation that exists in a common space built by individuals without divine cosmological intervention - or maybe they have cosmological intervention, we shall find out soon.

[beep]

In this common space, tropical resources and biodiversity is not just a property but an important part of a cultural formation.

Commoning here is understood as a practice in which sharing is part of the wisdom that is continually being updated and configured.

It is a process of social organisation in which the meaning of property is removed from the moral order.

[beep]

This philosophy of sharing, as a form of tropical thinking, emerges as a discourse based on the everyday ethical and political problems in social life beyond the speculation or wonder of nature and cosmology.

Everyday politics that prioritises common welfare rather than individual interests are formed by an organisational system based on reciprocity.

[beep]

This theory resonates with a notion developed by Indonesian philosopher M. Nasroen who writes that the mutual assistance system, which in the Indonesian archipelago is rhizomatically distributed in various systematic concept like gotong royong, mapalus, and many others, spreaded sporadically from the western side to the eastern part of archipelago

as a form of everyday politics according to the various cultural background and custom.

[beep]

For Nasroen, this philosophy of sharing is a customary law in a form of impulse of volunteerism that emerges from one individual to solve a systemic problem horizontally with another individual without any hierarchical status in the organisational system.

[beep]

In the context of Indonesia as a modern nation-state, the idea of common is also used as a mantra for the state-making project.

Which totally in contrast to our speculation of the Bumi society.

A utopia of decentralised and self-governed tropical future.

[beep]

Indonesia, in the mid 20th century, as a newly independent nation after World War II tries to build its own identity through the notion of common which then manifested in the terminology of gotong royong.

It is translated as mutual cooperation in English.

Gotong royong in this context means that services and skills are common resources.

On the other hand, nature is also considered a common resource for the state before being privatised.

As a cultural identity, the founding fathers of Indonesia thought of proposing a way of thinking that was unique from the other two dominant ideologies in the early Cold War period.

Before gotong royong is instrumentalised as a state-making mantra, during the Japanese occupation, Japan also used this form of commonality.

Japan embraces the word gotong royong as an Asian cultural identity which they applied in the time of their occupation through a concept of tonarigumi - the smallest unit in society or a mutual-aid association amongst neighbours.

Later, this concept of tonarigumi is developed as the smallest organisational unit in Indonesia such as the rukun tetangga.

From this, we can see that the notion of common and mutual aid is then continuously used as an identity-making and part of the major section in the state-making project in Indonesia.

An identity for tropical idealism.

[beep]

The narrative of the commons remains in the current understanding that the culture of a nation is developed through extraction of natural resources that are considered as a given.

Of course, the commons proposed by Indonesia as a state-making proposal is different from the philosophy of sharing that has mushroomed in the indigenous knowledge in the archipelago.

They do not rely on this institutionalised commons, which then eventually become the origin of extractive narratives for the state.

The state in this case operates as an organiser in the distribution of common resources for all citizens. This common management certainly produces concepts of exploitation which ultimately result in centralised bureaucracies.

[beep]

Therefore, the idea of a commoning process must be understood differently from the commons proposed by the state as a process of governmentality and distribution of resources, because the commons organised by the state enclosed the possibility of a more egalitarian resource distribution.

[beep]

Therefore, I think... the Buminites might have the possibility to develop a commoning process

that is analogous to the pre-state, pre-colonial, indigenous knowledge of tropical archipelago.
And in the context of xeno-anthropology, this might be the ideal theory in terms of developing good communication with the Bumi society.
Once we arrive there, what we can offer is not only giving them our technological advancement, but also a knowledge exchange of commoning as a form of what anthropologist Marshall Sahlins called: balanced reciprocity.

[beep]

To be frank, I am sceptical with this mission...

I am afraid that this mission could end with negative reciprocity.

In the end, we are just taking their land, instead of balanced or generalised reciprocity of knowledge exchange.

We can also potentially end up creating another state-making project as a form of governmentality.

Another existential risk, another form of colonialism.

But we are a dying species.

There's no other way.

[thump]

[...beep]

Log no. 277

Now I'm thinking a lot about it... it's pretty ironic that my xeno-anthropological theory of commoning process is actually in contrast to the core ideal of our mission... saving our species.

Embarking on a xeno-anthropological field research for some diplomacy work is the most humanistic approach to understand other beings.

It's an anthropocentrism playbook.

I just want to travel to the past.

I'm not interested anymore to travel to this tropical future.

[beep]

<sounds of rainforest>

Log no. 409

Does the future appeal to you?

It's all yours.

The future only matters to the one who shapes it.

In the end, we force our future on them.

Let them produce their own future.

A tropical one. Without us.

[end of transmission]
