

InFact WORKSHOP

INTRODUCING FUTURES OF ACADEMIC COLLABORATION – A NETWORK INITIATIVE

06.12.2021
9-12PM BERLIN TIME

REGISTRATION

Deadline: December 1

Register via Zoom link:

<https://hu-berlin.zoom.us/j/84451234567>

NEGOTIATING SCHOLAR-ACTIVISMS AND DIVERGENT POSITIONALITIES

Coordinators / Facilitators: Dr. Rosa Castillo, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Dr. Ferdiansyah Thajib, KUNCI Study Forum and Collective

TANDEM PARTNERS

- Dr. Chester Arcilla, University of the Philippines, Manila
- Dr. June Rubis, University of Sidney

PROGRAM

9.00-9.15AM INTRODUCTION ROUND

9.15-10.15 SESSION 1 – CHALLENGES OF SCHOLAR-ACTIVISM
ACROSS BORDERS

- Tandem conversation between Ferdiansyah Thajib and Chester Arcilla (30min.)
- Breakout room session for further discussion

10.15-10.30 Break

10.30-11.30 SESSION 2 – SUPPORTING SCHOLAR-ACTIVISM
ACROSS BORDERS

- Tandem conversation between Rosa Castillo and June Rubis
- Breakout room session for further discussion

11.30-12.00 SESSION 3 – WAYS FORWARD

- Round of reflections, suggestions and strategizing

The workshop sessions will be audio-recorded on zoom and made available as podcast as part of the InFact networking initiative afterwards. Participants can comment and ask questions anonymously via the zoom chat to one of the moderators to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

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WHAT WE AIM FOR AND WHO WE ARE

In the Global North, scholar-activism has been primarily understood as a mode of aligning one's academic work and community engagement for social justice. In Southeast Asian contexts, however, this distinction tends to be obscured due to the greater fluidity permeating across the fields of academia and activism. One may inhabit these spaces simultaneously or hold them in close proximity. At the same time, practices of scholar activism or activist scholarship in the region are often mired by limited academic infrastructures and political contexts that are variably volatile. In parallel, for Southeast Asian scholar-activists in the diaspora another set of challenges prevails. For many of us, being in the proximity of resources such as funding, technological infrastructures and so on, does not necessarily mean greater access as we are often subjected to structural exclusion and other social barriers related to the status of 'migrants' and/or people of colour.

This workshop focuses on modes of scholar-activism that engage with solidarity practices between diasporic and homeland politics in Southeast Asia. We are interested to learn more on how geographical and socio-institutional locations and the combinations of political dynamics and social struggles situated in those locations are being navigated by various scholar activists who are either based inside or outside of the region.

- How do scholar-activists who are physically located both in the proximity and far from the communities that they are in solidarity with negotiate the political and ethical challenges in producing knowledge?
- How do different geographical and institutional positionings shape practices of scholar-activism?
- In the world afflicted by Covid-19 pandemic, where on one hand, physical encounters have become more constrained and on the other hand, virtual interconnections flourish, how do



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scholar-activists sustain their commitments to and collaboration with social movements at home and elsewhere?

- What other ways of cultivating solidarity do they co-create beyond existing ways of thinking and organizing?

About the Workshop Facilitators & Resource Persons

Dr. Rosa Cordillera A. Castillo is a sociocultural anthropologist and engaged scholar based at Humboldt University of Berlin's Institute for Asian and African Studies. She works on peace and conflict studies, with a particular focus on moral and ethical self-formation, resistance, and solidarity in national and transnational contexts. She is also interested in and writes on decoloniality, critical research ethics, and engaged scholarship. As a scholar-activist, Rosa has been engaged in numerous initiatives and campaigns, both in the Philippines and in the diaspora.

Dr. Ferdiansyah Thajib is a researcher whose lifework is situated at the intersections of theory and praxis, with specific interests in queer modes of endurance and forms of affective entanglements in everyday life. He completed his doctoral study at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Freie Universität Berlin. He is a member of KUNCI Study Forum & Collective, a transdisciplinary research collective in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, which since 1999 has been experimenting with modes of producing and sharing knowledge through studying together.

Dr. Chester Arcilla teaches economics and critical urban studies at the University of the Philippines-Manila. His work focuses on urban marginality and right to the city struggles. His current research locates radical urban poor and housing politics with the global history of housing financialization and gentrification, and feminist home-making. As a scholar-activist, he constantly explores spaces for co-production of knowledge and solidarities with urban subalterns and the academe.

Dr. June Rubis is a postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Sydney Environment Institute, University of Sydney. As a former conservation biologist, June Rubis has about twelve years in hands-on wildlife conservation fieldwork in both Indonesian and Malaysian Borneo. She has also worked on Indigenous land rights and environmental issues in collaboration with Indigenous activists and NGOs in Malaysian Borneo. She has carried out research on Bidayuh ritual revitalization, under the guidance of her Bidayuh father and relatives, linking the revitalization with environmental change in her home state of Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo. Much of her approach to her work follows the teachings of her parents, including her late Bidayuh father, following his own parents' journey as traditional Bidayuh priest and priestess. Her PhD research examined a decolonial Indigenous approach to orang utan conservation in Sarawak. She holds both an MSc in Environmental Change and Management and a DPhil (Ph.D.) in Geography & Environment, from the University of Oxford.

About the InFact Networking Initiative

The networking initiative “InFACT – Introducing Futures of Academic Collaboration” aims to provide a platform for academic exchange among critical, de:postcolonial, feminist scholars, joining our long existing scholar (activist) networks and research collaborations spanning the regions of MENA, South and Southeast Asia as well as Europe. InFact takes a practically oriented approach in reconstructing and rewriting how we (re-)produce knowledge in terms of research methodologies and research ethics. We explore the following set of guiding questions in an open discussion:

- **Identification of challenges:** What kind of obstacles and problematics are we facing within academia when conducting participatory research and producing transformative knowledge? How can we challenge hegemonic paradigms in academic knowledge production and translate epistemic decolonisation effectively into our own research practices, speaking to our differently positioned histories of thought,

intellectual grids and structural conditions across global inequalities?

- **Working towards solutions:** What are best practices for structuring collaborative research processes, which allows both for a reflection on our positionalities in the Global Norths and the Global Souths as well as for spaces of translation between the differently produced, contextualised experiences and knowledges?
- **Translating into practice:** How are we to transfer such spaces of translation into transformative practices, which open up new avenues for transdisciplinary research methods and reflections on research ethics? What kind of transfer mechanisms such as teaching formats can we design, which speak to critical academic endeavours as well as to situated political contexts and struggles outside academia?

Coordinators: Dr. Sarah Farag, University of Zurich, Switzerland, and PD Dr. Andrea Fleschenberg dos Ramos Pinéu, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany. <https://www.iaaw.hu-berlin.de/de/region/suedostasien/forschung/netzwerke>.

Funding support is provided by the Joint Seed Money Program of both universities, part of their initiative for research partnerships.