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# Session 7 | 14 Dec 2023 | Critical Research Ethics as Decolonial Praxis

## Current Debates

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In this panel, Rosa Cordillera A. Castillo, Antony Pattathu, and June Rubis discuss and emphasize the importance of critical research ethics in decolonial praxis within academia, highlighting the harmful effects of irresponsible and extractive scholarship that perpetuates epistemic violence and injustice by disregarding Southern epistemologies, knowledge-makers, agency, and history. They argue that confronting the embeddedness of knowledge production in imperial, colonial, and patriarchal ideologies, practices, and histories, addressing colonial continuities and complicities and working towards preventing their perpetuation in research are crucial for engaging in a rehumanising and redistributive academic praxis. This includes challenging the limitations of superficial attempts to decolonise academic institutions and the role of whiteness in decoloniality, as well as the exclusion of Indigenous voices and failure to confront ongoing colonial violence. Thus, they

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suggest that a more meaningful decolonial project requires remaking relationships towards liberatory justice, including ethical collaboration and accountability with the communities researchers work with.

**Prof. Dr. Rosa Cordillera A. Castillo** is a sociocultural anthropologist, curator, and publicly engaged scholar. She is currently a substitute professor of public anthropology at the University of Bremen and formerly an interim professor and postdoc at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin's *Institute for Asian and African Studies* and curator at the *Haus der Kulturen der Welt*.

Her interdisciplinary research and initiatives on social justice issues, resistance and solidarity, imagination and memory, and affect and healing are guided by critical, decolonial, indigenous, and feminist epistemologies and praxes. She also specializes in critical research ethics, alternative pedagogies, and community-engaged scholarship, as well as reaching broader publics through reflexive multi-sensorial, multi-format, and research-based modes of learning.

### Relevant publications

Fleschenberg, Andrea, Kai Kresse, and Rosa Cordillera A. Castillo, eds. 2023.

Thinking with  
the South Reframing Research Collaboration amid Decolonial Imperatives  
and Challenges.  
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Fleschenberg, Andrea and Rosa Cordillera A. Castillo. 2022. Negotiating Research Ethics in Volatile Contexts. *International Quarterly of Asian Studies*, 53(4): 495-503.

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Castillo, Rosa Cordillera and Hansjörg Dilger. 2022. Ethics as embodied practice: reflexivity, dialogue, and collaboration – Rosa Castillo in conversation with Hansjörg Dilger. *International Quarterly of Asian Studies*, 53(4): 505-518.

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[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-75201-9\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-75201-9_13)

Castillo, Rosa Cordillera. 2018. ‚Subverting ‚formalised‘ ethics through mainstreaming critical research ethics and a responsive review process.‘ *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale*, 26:3.

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<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01459740.2014.960564>

Castillo, Rosa Cordillera and Fatima Alvarez Castillo. 2009. "The law is not enough: free and prior informed consent issues raised by the mining of Philippine indigenous peoples' lands with insights from the San-hoodia case." In *Indigenous Peoples, Consent and Benefit Sharing: Lessons from the San-Hoodia Case*, Wynberg R, Vermeulen S, Chennels R. eds. South Africa: Springer. Pp. 271-284. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-3123-5\\_14](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-3123-5_14)

**Dr. Antony Pattathu** is a social and cultural anthropologist and scholar of religion. He holds a PhD from the University of Heidelberg and studied in Berkeley and Heidelberg and is a Habilitation Candidate at the department for social and cultural Anthropology and founding member of the Interdisciplinary Centre for Global South Studies at the University of Tübingen. His research focuses on, care migration, gender and religion in/ and between India (Kerala) and Germany. His other research focus is decolonization, postcolonialism, and racism. Through workshops and conferences at universities, in the field of education and in collaboration with different communities, cities and museums, he addresses the question of how the debate on decolonization makes new formats and dialogues on cultures of remembrance and the reappraisal of colonial history possible in order to shape academic fields and society in a way that is critical of racism and sensitive to questions of diversity and

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*a pluralistic culture of remembrance.*

### Relevant publications

Pattathu, Antony (2023) Decolonizing Anthropology and/as Education? In: Weitdmann Niels, Martin Porr (Hrsg.) *One World Anthropology and Beyond. A Multidisciplinary Engagement with the Work of Tim Ingold*. Routledge: London.

Pattathu, Antony, Barnett-Nagshineh, Olivia (2021) Introduction to the Special Issue: ‚Decolonizing Anthropology: Race, Emotions and Pedagogy in the European Classroom‘ *Teaching Anthropology Journal* Vol. 10 (4).

Pattathu, Antony, Barnett-Nagshineh, Olivia, Camufingo, Angelo et. al. (2021) ‚The Fires within us and the Rivers Ahead‘. *Teaching Anthropology Journal* Vol. 10 (4). both [open access](#)

Pattathu, Antony (2018) ‚Ayurveda and Discursive Formations between Religion, Medicine and Embodiment. A Case Study from Germany‘. In: Dorothea Lüddeckens, Monika Schrimpf (Hrsg.) *Medicine – Religion – Spirituality. Global Perspectives on Traditional, Complementary, and Alternative Healing*.

**Dr. June Rubis** has about twelve years in hands-on primate conservation fieldwork and community work in Borneo before embarking on her graduate studies. Her PhD (DPhil) in environmental geography from the University of Oxford, UK explored decolonising orang utan conservation in Sarawak. She held a three-year postdoctoral fellowship at the Sydney

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Environment Institute, University of Sydney and was recently offered a lectureship at a Russell Group university in the UK. She turned it down to explore more applied work bridging decolonial perspectives, political ecology and Indigenous and local communities governance to reimagine new pathways in conservation.

Since 2020, June has been the Co-Chair of Documenting Territories theme, for the ICCA (Indigenous and community conserved areas) global consortium, and a member of the International Indigenous Forum of Biodiversity (IIFB). She is the co-founder and co-director of (BiiH) Building Initiatives in Indigenous Heritage to support community conservation and cultural heritage in her Bidayuh homelands of Bau, Sarawak, West Kalimantan and elsewhere.

### Relevant publications

Rubis, June Mary, and Noah Theriault. 'Concealing protocols: Conservation, Indigenous survivance, and the dilemmas of visibility'. *Social & cultural geography* 21, no. 7 (2020): 962-984.

Rubis, June Mary. 'The orang utan is not an indigenous name: knowing and naming the maias as a decolonizing epistemology.' *Cultural Studies* 34, no. 5 (2020): 811-830.

Rubis, June. 'A Political Ecology for Remembering for Dayaks of Sarawak, Malaysian

Borneo'. *Thinking with the South: Reframing Research Collaboration Amid Decolonial Imperatives and Challenges*. De Gruyter, Vol 44 (2023): 249-

Mabele, Mathew Bukhi, Laila Thomaz Sandroni, Yolanda Ariadne Collins, and

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2021. (2021).

[Mongabay Interview](#)

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