Workshop Report

The Various Ways of Knowing: Transdisciplinary Dialogues on Knowledge, Land, and People

Samuel Amorim

The idea of this workshop came from a conversation between early-career researchers who wanted to explore the existence of various ways of doing research and to debate how we can publish when we want to innovate in academia. Born out of two different but connected conversations, the workshop entitled "The Various Ways of Knowing: Transdisciplinary Dialogues on Knowledge, Land, and People" was also divided into two parts: a workshop and a writeshop. We aimed to present our research in the first part and receive comments on those presentations and papers, and, finally, to have a talk with an experienced scholar about the reality of academic publication.

The workshop had four presenters in the first session, and in the writeshop part, two presenters plus a talk given by one of our discussants. Our first presenter, Samuel Amorim, PhD Candidate, presented his paper that tried to link Autonomy Theory in Latin America's International Relations theory with Agrarian Studies' search for autonomy by Indigenous peoples and peasants. Without claiming a unified theory, his paper advances a multi-subject, multilevel approach and establishes a research agenda concerning the conditions under which autonomous projects reinforce, overlook, or constrain one another. Following him, we had Visiting Researcher Hanna Nur Afifah Yogar, who talked about her paper, an ethnographic study in Ranum Village, West Kalimantan, that examines how a Dayak Iban community navigates post-recognition governance, analyzing how bordering capitalist expansion generates friction within customary life.

After a quick break, we had Beatrice Melo, an Adjunct Professor at Sophia and Yokohama National University, present her paper that looked at sustainable fashion policies and circulatory initiatives promoted in white papers, reports, and regulations enacted by the Japanese government. This research aims to examine how this strategy results in multi-level impacts that hinder recipient

countries, the environment, and local economies. Then, Sinwa Naw, PhD Researcher, presented his paper on the historical process of Kachin State's political economy and its political ecology crisis, resulting from treating natural resources as a means to leverage political and economic projects. It asks how the production of power and class is deeply rooted in resource accumulation and dispossession.

We then moved to the second part of our event, the Writeshop, which started with two brief presentations by Shoko Yamada, Assistant Professor at Sophia University, and Camille Kate Ancheta, Undergraduate Student of the FLA. The first presenter, Shoko Yamada, presented a chapter of her book about a project that attempted to restore contaminated land and water in a region in Japan, arguing that the attempt to repair transforms the issue by producing new forms of dilemma. Camille Kate Ancheta presented a paper that focuses on Filipino workers in Japan. Drawing on Stuart Hall's approach to discourse analysis and James Ferguson's concept of the antipolitics machine, her paper comparatively examines state discourses and analyzes how they depoliticize structural and political problems. It argues that, despite employing different terminologies, both states use their framing of migration discourse to advance state interests while referring to the same migrant workers.

Finally, we had a talk given by Prof. Saturnino “Jun” Borras, Jr. about the conditions under which early-career scholars live and work and try to make relevant contributions to academia. It led to a conversation about the systemic character of the marginalization of far too many scholars in the global knowledge complex, especially those from the Global South and/or who question the status quo. After the talk, all the presenters, discussants, and the audience debated new ways of knowing and how we can pursue them in and beyond academia. The main point was that this discussion was not going to end after this event; rather, this Writeshop could be the beginning of building a cohort of fellow travelers to journey together. It was an initiative toward establishing a network in order to build a community and construct a movement. That conversation continued on the next day, when a group of the GPGS workshop organizers met with Prof. Jun Borras and Prof. Takeshi Ito and discussed individual research orientations and outlooks, including how to write and publish papers.