



INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

**Plural Ecologies and Planetary Justice:
Intercultural Approaches to Rethinking
Climate Crises in the Global South**

01 - 07 APRIL, 2026

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES,
IIT KHARAGPUR**



Overview:

The climate crisis represents one of the most pressing challenges of the twenty-first century, demanding not only technological or policy-oriented responses but a fundamental rethinking of the epistemological and ontological assumptions that have shaped human relations with the natural world. This project argues that the contemporary ecological crisis is inseparable from modernity's colonial understanding of nature as an external, passive, and territorially bounded domain to be mastered, exploited, and transformed into a resource for human use. Such an understanding, historically entangled with colonial expansion and capitalist extraction, has produced modes of inhabiting the world that intensify ecological destruction and climatic instability.

Drawing on postcolonial, decolonial, and intercultural frameworks, the project critically examines non-modern ways of experiencing and conceptualizing nature that have been marginalized or erased by colonial power relations. It pays particular attention to intercultural perspectives from East Asia, which are often underrepresented within postcolonial debates predominantly centered on South Asian contexts. These perspectives are not approached as alternative cultural "views" of a single, universal nature, but as distinct ontological formations that articulate different relations between humans, non-humans, and ecological worlds.

By thinking with the non-modern, the project explores how diverse experiences of nature generate geo-centered subjectivities—forms of self-understanding, cultural meaning, and ethical orientation that emerge from specific ecological relations rather than from abstract human exceptionalism. Such subjectivities challenge the persistence of modernity's anthropocentric and extractivist frameworks and open possibilities for reimagining human–nature relations in ways that are responsive to climatic precarity. Ultimately, the project demonstrates that taking non-colonial and intercultural ontologies of nature seriously is crucial for moving beyond the limits of modern environmental thought and for developing more plural, situated, and ethically grounded responses to the climate crisis.

Subthemes:

Modernity, Colonialism, and the Ontology of Nature

This subtheme examines how modernity conceptualizes nature as an external object separate from the human subject. It traces how this ontology was globalized through colonialism, restructuring landscapes, economies, and ecological relations across the world. The subtheme interrogates how this legacy continues to shape contemporary environmental discourse and climate governance.

Climate Crisis as an Epistemological and Ontological Problem

Moving beyond technocratic understandings of climate change, this subtheme approaches the crisis as a problem rooted in dominant ways of knowing and being. It critiques sustainability and management-driven responses that reproduce modern instrumental rationality, arguing for the need to rethink the foundational categories through which nature is understood.

Postcolonial and Decolonial Critiques of Environmental Modernity

This subtheme draws on postcolonial and decolonial scholarship to highlight the entanglement of ecological degradation with colonial histories of extraction and dispossession. It also critically reflects on the limits of postcolonial environmentalism when it inadvertently retains modern universalist assumptions about nature.

Intercultural Ontologies of Nature

Focusing on intercultural perspectives, this subtheme emphasizes the plurality of ecological ontologies that exist beyond Western modernity. It resists the homogenization of non-Western thought and instead foregrounds culturally embedded ways of relating to land, ecology, and non-human life.

East Asian Experiences of Nature and Ecological Relationality

This subtheme brings East Asian traditions into the conversation, highlighting relational, process-oriented, and non-dual conceptions of nature. By doing so, it addresses the relative absence of East Asian ecological thought in postcolonial and decolonial climate discourses and demonstrates its relevance for contemporary ecological crises.

Geo-Centered Subjectivities and Ecological Selfhood

Here, the focus shifts to subjectivity formation. This subtheme explores how different experiences of nature produce distinct forms of selfhood and cultural meaning. It contrasts modern autonomous subjectivity with geo-centered subjectivities grounded in relational ecological contexts.

Thinking With the Non-Modern: Methodological and Ethical Implications

This subtheme articulates the project's methodological stance of thinking with rather than merely about non-modern perspectives. It emphasizes epistemic humility, ethical openness, and dialogical engagement as necessary conditions for reimagining climate thought beyond colonial and anthropocentric limits.

You Should Attend If...

- You are a Research student or faculty member of the Humanities and Social Science disciplines interested in areas of Planetary Ecology, Decolonial Thinking, New Humanities, and Ecological Crises.
- You are a cognoscenti, writer, intellectual, member of the intelligentsia or some industrial house interested in or likely to benefit from Critical Theory, Philosophy, Art and Literature, Politics, and Sociocultural concerns or interdisciplinary mode of research.

Fees:

The participation fees for taking the course are as follows:

- Research Scholars: Rs. 3,000
- Faculty & Academic Institutions: Rs. 5,000

Registration Link:

<https://erp.iitkgp.ac.in/CEP/courses.htm>

Last date for registration: 25th March 2026

Send your queries to :

Organising Committee : conferencehssiitkgp@gmail.com



Speakers:



Prof. Kirsten Sandrock is Professor and Chair of English Literature and Cultural Studies at the University of Würzburg, and works primarily in the areas of early modern literature and colonial encounters. Her publications include the monograph *Gender and Region: Maritime Fiction in English by Canadian Women, 1976–2005* (2009) as well as the articles ‘The Quest for Authenticity: History and Class in Ian Rankin’s Rebus Novels’ (*Scottish Literary Review* 3.1 [2011]) and ‘Rethinking the Region in Canadian Postcolonial Studies’ (*Zeitschrift für Kanada-Studien* 31.2 [2011]). She also co-edited the essay collection (with Owain Wright) *Locating Italy: East and West in British–Italian Transactions* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013).



Prof. Saugata Bhaduri is Professor of literature and cultural theory at the Centre for English Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Professor Bhaduri has entertained numerous research interests over the years, spanning continents and centuries. He has produced talks and articles on the subjects of translation, popular culture, diasporic cultures and language. He was invited as a visiting scholar and professor in the United Kingdom, Germany, France, USA and Poland notably. His latest book *Polycoloniality: European Transactions with Bengal from the 13th to the 19th Century* (2020) is published by Bloomsbury.



Prof. Simi Malhotra is Professor at the Department of English, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Her areas of interest include Literary Theory and Culture Studies. Her earlier publications include the co-authored books *Terrains of Consciousness: Multilogical Perspectives on Globalization* (Würzburg University Press, 2021) and *Ocean as Method: Thinking with the Maritime* (Routledge, 2022), and the co-edited books *Food Culture Studies in India: Consumption, Representation and Mediation*, and *Inhabiting Cyberspace in India: Theory, Perspectives and Challenges* (both from Springer, 2021). Her more recent co-edited books are *Globalization and Sense-Making Practices: Phenomenologies of the Global, Local and Glocal* (2023), *Globalization and Planetary Ethics: New Terrains of Consciousness* (2023), *Affective World-Making: Routing Planetary Thought* (2024), and *Panorama of the Pandemic: A Phenomenological Inquiry* (2025), all from from Routledge. Her latest co-edited book is *Trauma and Memory Studies: Responses from India and Beyond* (Springer, 2025). She is also the recipient of several grants and awards, including the Duo-India Professor Fellowship and the UGC-DAAD-PPP Award, with which she was Visiting Professor at Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg, Germany, for three consecutive years from 2022 to 2024.



Prof. Niels Weidtmann is the Director of the College of Fellows - Center for Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Studies at the University of Tübingen. He received his doctorate from the University of Würzburg with a thesis on intercultural philosophy under Heinrich Rombach. Habilitation in cultural theory at the University of Tübingen. He was a visiting researcher at the University of Vienna and at Doshisha University, Kyoto. Since 2019 he is elected President of the Society for Intercultural Philosophy (GIP e.V.). His research interests are in phenomenology and hermeneutics, structural philosophy, philosophical anthropology and intercultural philosophy. Recent Publications: *One World Anthropology and Beyond. A Multidisciplinary Engagement with the Work of Tim Ingold* (co-edited with Martin Porr; Routledge 2023); *Analogie. Zur Aktualität eines philosophischen Schlüsselbegriffs* (co-edited with Dietmar Koch and Alina Noveanu; Alber 2023); *Interkulturelle Philosophie. Aufgaben, Wege, Dimensionen* (Francke/UTB 2016).



Prof. David R Cole is an Associate Professor at Western Sydney University. He has been a philosopher of education for over two decades, with a PhD in Philosophy of Education from the University of Warwick. He has worked on four continents, and have helped found the knowledge area of 'Deleuze and Education', which explores the implications of the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze's ideas for educational theory and practice. He has published 18 books and more than 130 other contributions to the field, and is currently working on how education can make a difference in an era of anthropogenic planetary boundary crossing. He is the founder and director of the International Institute for Research in the Anthropocene (IIRA), a web-based platform for interdisciplinary and collaborative research in education and the Anthropocene. He also lead a research program called 'Education in the Anthropocene' and co-convene a research network as part of the World Education Research Association by the same name.



Prof. Eben Kirksey is a Professor of Anthropology at University of Oxford, UK. He is a cultural anthropologist and award-winning author. Broadly speaking, his research and teaching relates to the environment, medical anthropology, continental philosophy, and human rights. Kirksey is perhaps best known for his work in multispecies ethnography—an emerging field that considers how people interact with animals, microbes, plants, and fungi. Wide ranging interests—related to novel ecosystems, biological art, medical ethics, reproductive justice, CRISPR gene editing, and disability—are reflected in his diverse publications. Hope is a recurring theme in his work: not as naive optimism, but as a method for identifying fragile possibilities for life, justice, and peaceful coexistence. Currently he is studying how the human condition has been shaped by symbiotic viruses, biotechnology, chemical exposures, and capitalism. As a pro-bono human rights expert, Eben Kirksey has long collaborated with Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch to advocate for justice in West Papua, a territory under Indonesian rule. Recently he has also been involved in advocacy and research related to multispecies justice and environmental sustainability. “The Emergence of Multispecies Ethnography,” his co-authored article with Stefan Helmreich, has become a highly-cited text in anthropology and has influenced research agendas in science studies, geography, ecology, and the environmental humanities.



Prof. Ananya Roy Pratihara is an Assistant Professor in Communication Studies at the Institute of Management and Information Science, Bhubaneswar, India. Her research interests include Decolonial Studies, Deleuze studies, Film Studies, Eco humanism, Communication Studies and Cultural Studies. Dr. Pratihara has jointly edited books *Deleuze, Guattari and the Schizoanalysis of the Global Pandemic: Revolutionary Praxis and Neoliberal Crisis* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2023), *Technology, Urban Space and the Networked Community* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022). She was a visiting Faculty at the Institute of English and American Studies, University of Oldenburg, Germany in May 2024 and in the Department of Anglophone Literature and Culture at Göttingen University (1-15 November 2025).

Coordinator:



Prof. Saswat Samay Das is an Associate Professor at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, India. His research aims at critically engaging with assemblages of New Humanities such as Continental philosophy, Deleuze & Guattari Studies, Decolonial Studies, Environmental and Planetary studies. He was a visiting Professor at the Institute of English and American Studies, University of Oldenburg, Germany in May 2024 and in the Department of Anglophone Literature and Culture at Göttingen University (1-15 November 2025). His books yield reconstructive insight into diverse contemporary issues and remain committed to yielding new line of flights against deadlocking mobility of global capitalism. Some of his recent books include: *Technology, Urban Space and the Networked Community* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), *Deleuze and the Global Terror*, (Edinburgh University Press, 2022), *Deleuze, Guattari and the Schizoanalysis of the Global Pandemic: Revolutionary Praxis and Neoliberal Crisis* (Bloomsbury, 2023) and *Deleuze, Guattari and the Schizoanalysis of Post-Neoliberalism* (Bloomsbury, 2024). Some of his forthcoming books are *Religion Politics & New Materialism: Philosophical Perspectives* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2025) & *“Outside” Political Economy: New Networks of Media & Digitality* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2025). He has published in well-known international journals such as *Philosophy in Review*, *Deleuze Studies*, *Cultural politics, Theory & Event*, *Contemporary South Asia*, and *Economic and Political Weekly*.