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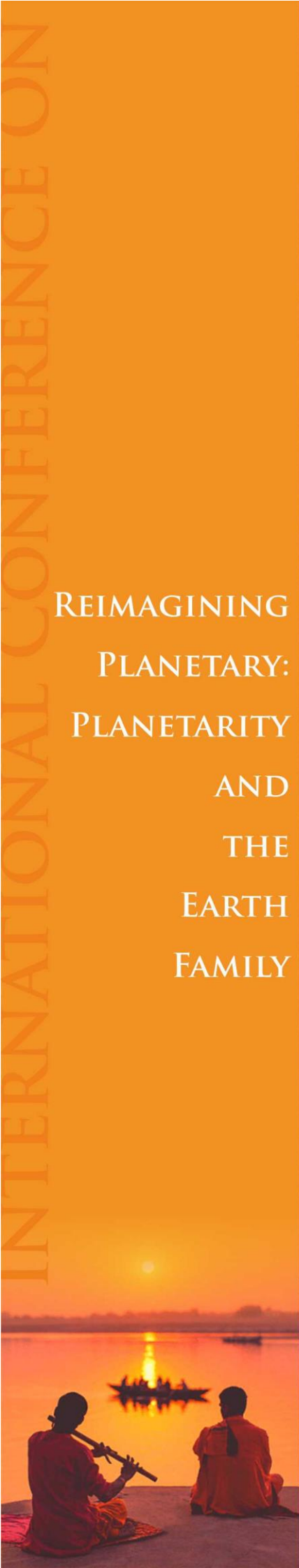


BANARAS HINDU
UNIVERSITY

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON
REIMAGINING PLANETARY
PLANETARITY AND THE EARTH FAMILY
————— 24-25 NOVEMBER 2023 —————



ORGANIZED BY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
IN COLLABORATION WITH
MALAVIYA CENTRE FOR ETHICS AND HUMAN VALUES
BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
REIMAGINING
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AND
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“You wonder,” writes Bharati Mukherjee in her novel *The Tree Bride*, “if everyone and everything in the world is intimately related...You pluck a thread, and it leads to...everywhere.” And she goes on to ask: “Is there a limit to relatedness?”

The necessity for rethinking human beings emanates from the multiple entangled pandemics, unstable weather patterns that jeopardise food production, rising sea levels that compound the risk of catastrophic flooding, and the effects of poverty, war, and recession which are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. Therefore, to be human in the twenty-first century requires understanding the realities of human-induced climate calamities, realising the dangers of the carbon economy as well as ecological limits to capitalism and developing non-anthropocentric worldviews to find out the possibilities of the common planetary futures.

The current climate crisis challenges western modernity and Enlightenment ideas, mostly anthropocentric and rooted in the Platonic and Judeo-Christian metaphysical traditions. However, humanists, as Bruno Latour puts it, were “concerned only about humans; the rest, for them, is mere materiality or cold objectivity”. Captive to Cartesian dualism and instrumentalist rationality of industrial/capitalist modernity, our material entanglements in the past have led to environmental catastrophes, exploitation of resources, and eco-technological evolution signalled by the Anthropocene, necessitating a critical re-engagement with the Enlightenment binary of man versus nature. Posthumanist discourse in the recent decades advanced towards a non-dualistic understanding of multiplicity and radical interdependency suggesting that human is not the be-all and end-all. It argued that the human, in a shared world, is co-constituted by its humananimality, leading us to rethink the human in relation to the planetary consciousness. Consequently, this requires us to re-learn how our biotic, material and utilitarian entanglements have complicated our planetary lives in the twenty-first century and how humans need to rise above the ‘nature’ and ‘cultural’ paradigm, from mere conceptual and contextual understanding, and think of the planet both in the tangible and intangible perspectives.

In her book *Death of a Discipline*, Gayatri Spivak makes a case for 'planet-thought', intending the term 'planetary' as an ethical alternative to globalization. For Spivak, the idea of 'planetarity' invokes "a tuned way of understanding the materiality of the world and our collective place and responsibility as humans within it". She suggests that the planet is concrete and ecological, and if we are going to share it as one species alongside other species, then we need to imagine it not as a place to put our capitalist markets but as a haven for our bodies and minds. The concept of 'planetarity' challenges (post)Enlightenment narrative by refraining us from either falling into the trap of universality inattentive to difference or the trap of relativism without entanglement. As we concentrate on the planetary, we must consider how we can attend to the universal and particular together by reframing the common slogan, "We are all in this together," with the addition of "but we are not in it in the same way". Timothy Morton in his work *Hyperobjects* writes: "All life forms are the mesh, and so are all the dead ones, as are their habitats, which are also made up of living and non-living beings". Morton uses the word 'mesh' to refer to this planetary interconnectedness of all living and non-living things, consisting of infinite connections and infinitesimal differences.

The planetary is a conceptual category that needs to be interrogated for its critical potential. Therefore, this conference seeks to explore innovative topics that address planetarity. We invite contributions that explore how planetarity supersedes and delimits older humanists as well as the posthumanist notions of identity, (un)belonging, nation-states and borders, space, migrations, etc. The readings, representations, and discourses of the planet as an ontological and critical category need to be perceived differently from earlier postmodern discourses of diversity, difference, and alterity. In this context, this conference seeks to explore the planet as one where the hierarchical order is absent and which, instead, promises a heterarchy foregrounding social, political and cultural power inequities. How do these transformations contribute to life on the planet? How do they enable, complicate, or undermine the making of a planetary imaginary? The concept of planetary, for us, translates as everything we do

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to our planet, we do to ourselves—“*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*”— a Sanskrit phrase that means that the whole world is a family and that all beings have equal rights to the gifts of the earth. The first *mantra* of the *Isavasya Upanishad* says:

*Isavasyamidamsarvamyatkimcajagatyamjagat,
tenatyaktenabhunjitha, ma gridhahkasyasviddhanam*
(Isa 1)



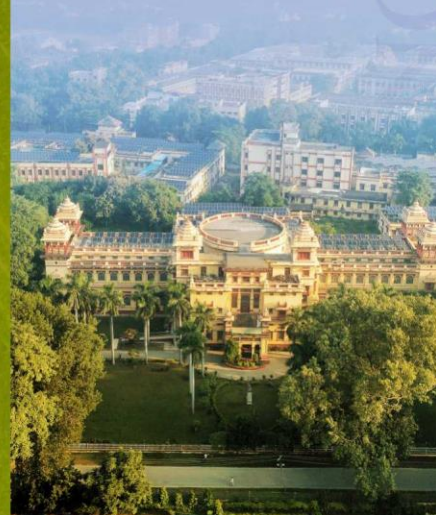
Tagore translated the above incantation in *The Religion of the Forest*: “Know all that moves in this moving world as enveloped by God, and find enjoyment through renunciation, not through the greed of possession”. The same thought inspired Mahatma Gandhi to say, “The Earth has enough for everyone's needs but not for some people's greed”. In a similar vein, Vandana Shiva's *Navdanya* organization website states, “As Earth citizens, through Earth Democracy, we can create abundance and well-being for all”. This approach enables us to shift from the “I-them” approach to the “I-we” approach. It also nurtures a *Dharma*-based society where the strong care for the weak, where giving precedes taking and where rights and responsibilities are synchronous. Borrowing from the logo of G20 for 2023, this conference reiterates the concept of One Earth, One Family, and One Future.



Topics could include but may not be limited to:

- Ecology, Environment, and Climate Change
- Anthropocene and the Ecological Turn
- Indian Ecological Perspectives
- Ecocriticism and Deep Ecology
- Apocalyptic Spaces
- Rural-Urban Divide
- Nature-Culture Dichotomy
- Health Humanities, Pandemic and the Planet
- Disability and Exclusion
- Indigenous Worldviews and Marginalized Communities
- Intersectionality in Caste, Class, Gender, Sexuality, and Race
- Forms of Precarity and the Planet
- Native Knowledge/Indigenous Knowledge Traditions
- Folk Planetary & Eco-Tourism
- Performativity and the Making of Public Planetary Spheres
- Planet, Terrorism, Trauma, and Victimhood
- Memory, Post-memory, Personal and Collective Narratives of the Past
- Video Games, Television, Streaming, and Podcasting
- Graphic Narratives and the Comics
- Corporeal Experience, Food, and Music
- Performativity and the Making of Public Planetary Spheres
- Cosmopolitan
- Posthumanism
- Digital Humanities

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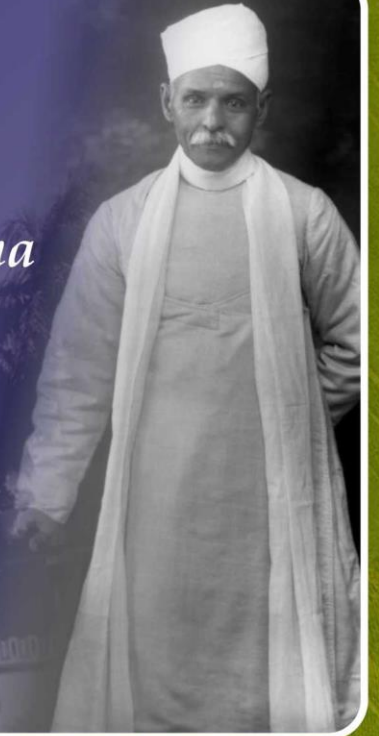
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*Divinity lies in
developing Human values*

- Mahamana



For Registration and Abstract Submission

Registration Link : <https://tinyurl.com/engbhu>

Last Date of Submission of Abstract : 30th September 2023

Please email your abstracts via the Google Form link only

Please email your queries, if any, to : engbhuseminars@gmail.com



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