

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Roorkee in Collaboration with
175 Years Celebration Committee, IIT Roorkee

Call for Papers to an

International Conference

Environmental Change and Socio-Cultural Transformations in India

Organisers: Roluahpuia, Lalatendu Keshari Das, Anindya Jayanta Mishra

Sponsor: Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee

Location: Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology
Roorkee, Uttarakhand, India

Date: September 22-23, 2022

Keynote Speaker- Prof. Joy L.K. Pachau (Center for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru
University, New Delhi)

How can we understand the global processes of change and crisis today? The conference will deliberate this by using transformation as a *conceptual lens* and an *analytical framework*. Transformation can entail change at multiple levels (macro/global and micro/rural) and the process of change with diverse actors and groups creatively engaged as agents of transformation, either as individuals or groups seeking transformation or involved in transforming societies. In doing so, the purpose of the conference is to foreground the historical processes of transformation, but one that is non-linear, non-teleological, and non-binary. We aim to unpack the politics of transformation—the political nature of transformation and how actors are situated politically across different ideological spectrums. We, therefore, view transformation in both social and political terms. Today, the discourse of transformations in India as elsewhere is dominated by concerns about environmental change and the pace through which such change needs to be responded. However, there remains a significant gap in terms of a cross-disciplinary dialogue that highlight the complex and contested nature of transformation. In this context, we strive to address the questions and issues of transformation, acknowledging the diverse and contested terrain that the field encompasses. As climate change is increasingly threatening to undermine the present world order with emerging countries and regions at the frontiers of transformations, it is time that we consider this moment to deliberate on the different dimensions of transformation from a social ecology perspective. Against this backdrop, we are seeking papers to look at transformation both as a *framework* and as a *field of study* following the below mentioned themes:

1. What is transformation?
 - a. How broadly do we and should we define transformation and what elements does that encompass? Can there be a universal definition or approach to transformation?

- b. How can we explain the historical process of transformation? Do we speak of transformation in singular or in plural forms?
 - c. How is transformation related to its neighbouring concepts like revolution, shift and metamorphosis and seemingly opposing concepts like adjustment, adaptation, mitigation, coping and resilience?
2. Who is to transform?
- a. Who decides what needs to be transformed? Are these entities working at the level of communities, civil societies, states-both provincial and federal, or transnational organisations like the United Nations, European Union and/or funding agencies like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank?
 - b. Who gets to imagine transformation, and whose vision of transformation are we talking about?
 - c. What subjectivities are integral to the various theories of adaptations? What are the human and non-human aspects of these transformations under consideration?
3. What kind of transformation are we talking about?
- a. In which way(s) transformation is conditioned by or subjected to the uncertainties of social, cultural, historical, political, economic and environmental factors?
 - b. Can transformation address the existing hierarchies and inequities in society? Does one form of transformation create newer forms of uncertainties?
 - c. How is our understanding of transformation shaped by certain cultural milieus, power differentials and political economic and ecological vulnerabilities?
 - d. How do we relate different transformations, like- holistic, emancipatory, substantive, incremental, deliberative and/or sustainable, among others- with each other?
4. What is the social ecology of transformation processes and results?
- a. How are the changes in ecological infrastructure like soil, water, and forests bring shifts in the elements of culture (the arts, religion, and ideology)?
 - b. Does a transformation in ecology bring changes in polity? How do the relations of power, processes of law making and their implementation and the role of state change owing to certain forms of transformations in ecology?
 - c. What shifts do we witness in the roles of family and kinship, caste and community and tribes and their customs while deliberating on the ideas of transformation?

- d. What can transformation look like in the economy, with relation to the forces and relations of production, and trade and commerce?
5. Where is the transformation?
 - a. Are we talking about transformations at ontological, epistemological and/or discursive levels? Or are we deliberating spatial or geographical locations like coastal, desert, Himalayan, forest and water?
 - b. Is it the Global South or the indigenous communities and other marginalized groups? What does transformation mean for these groups?
 - c. Is transformation necessarily global? Or can we talk about region-centric transformation?

Please send in your abstracts to both Roluahpuia (puia@hs.iitr.ac.in) and Lalatendu Keshari Das (lkdas@hs.iitr.ac.in). As we have plans to publish the papers presented as an edited book with an international publishing house, so, we request you to kindly send unpublished paper abstracts. Confirmation of participation would entail a commitment to contribute to the edited volume. Participants whose abstracts are accepted have to submit full papers. Manuscripts can have both single and joint authorship.

Travel within India and modest accommodation at the institute guest house will be provided to all the paper presenters at the conference in case of single authored works. In case of joint authorship, organisers can reimburse only one presenter of their travel and accommodation memo.

Important Information

Abstract Length: 250 words

Last date of abstract submission: 7th May 2022.

Full Papers: 6000-7000 words

Last date of paper submission: August 15, 2022

Organisers:

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