

**CALL FOR PAPERS FOR
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
(HYBRID MODE)**

**Navigating
Sustainable
Futures:
Literary
Reflections on
Precarious
Lives and the
Anthropocene**

February 24-25, 2024

Organized by

Department of Humanities and Social
Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology Patna
&
School of Liberal Arts
Bennett University, Greater Noida

In association with

University of Toronto, Canada
University of Northampton, UK
Aarhus University, Denmark
University of York, England

CONCEPT NOTE

We live in precarious times. Life and living conditions, especially in the global south, are being compromised, policed, and cramped in unprecedented ways, thus decimating both social infrastructures and environmental ecosystems, and causing unprecedented levels of mobility as asylum seekers seek new territories of habitation. The current concern with the health of the planet and the well-being and sustainability of societies globally is mobilized by the recognition that breathing spaces are becoming increasingly undemocratized, controlled, and suppressed. Likewise, the ecosystem is rendered precarious due to extractive neoliberalism practices. As the risk of environmental catastrophe and pandemic increases, it has generated a demand to rethink health and living conditions and to navigate a more sustainable future, through identifying alternative solidarities and sources of healing, repair and renewal.

In this current age of the Anthropocene, there's an urgent need to dethrone the human subject, decolonize ways of knowing and reframe ecocritical thinking on the environment. In considering such radical changes, we argue that literature takes on a special value as a site for dismantling the neoliberal and social structures underlying planetary precarity; one which enables the challenge to neocolonial economic exploitation and ecological crisis, and the exploration of nonhuman-human entanglements. Literary texts aiming to articulate the unthinkable and unspeakable are a fertile source for imaginings of catastrophe, and injustice yet hopeful futures, and a vital guide in critical engagements with precarious lives as conditioned by health and the environment.

This conference, therefore, aims to explore how postcolonial narratives about issues of precarity in the age of the Anthropocene challenge the conventions of utopic and dystopic visions to offer fresh insights and perspectives.

It is mobilized by questions such as

- How do we continue in our efforts to gain equitable access to natural resources?
- How can we find a new voice of hope to mitigate the intensified grip of precarity and ongoing environmental catastrophe?
- What radical practices of care and solidarity can replace the rhetoric of constant growth?

The conference hopes to attract papers that will identify alternative literary patterns of representation that interweave poetic and politics, advance new states of being that include empathy, caring and replenishment, and elaborate visions of planetary welfare through a more interconnected worldview.

This CFP, situated at the intersections of literary fiction, issues of precarity, and the environmental, invites critical investigations into the following topics (although not limited to them)

- Dystopian Imaginaries and the Anthropocene
- Climate catastrophe, ecofeminism, and ecocriticism
- Migration and refugees
- Zoonotic diseases and/or pandemics
- (Mental) health disability, and neoliberalism
- AI, human autonomy, (social) justice
- Re-codifying gender in the twenty-first century
- Reimagining sustainability through AI, health and the environment?
- Extractive neoliberalism and ecologies
- The Anthropocene, capitalism, and the reconfigured workforce
- Science fiction and indigenous mythologies
- Environmental injustice and eco-precariety
- Indigenous environmentalism and ecological justice
- Alternative futures, beyond precariety

Papers will be selected based on abstracts (a maximum of 250 words) **to be submitted by January 15, 2024**, to priyankatripathiitp@gmail.com.

The decision regarding the acceptance of the proposed papers will be communicated by January 25, 2024.

Respective **fees (both online and offline) for registration and paper presentation:**

- **Indian Presenters: INR 3000**
- **International Presenters: 100 USD**

Accommodation can be arranged on a payment basis by contacting the IIT Patna guest house (on a first come first serve basis) (frontdesk.iitp@gmail.com)

The conference will be held in hybrid mode. **For any queries**, please contact

Ms Parvathy N (nandakumarparvathy123@gmail.com)

or

Ms Sikha Mohanty (sikhamohanty.0110@gmail.com)

Conference Organizers:

Dr Priyanka Tripathi, Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Patna (India)

Dr Om Prakash Dwivedi, Associate Professor & Dean in Charge, School of Liberal Arts, Bennett University (India)