



CALL FOR PAPERS

Annual Conference of the Society for Intercultural Philosophy
“The Political Dimension of Nature. An Intercultural Critique”

June 4-6, 2021

University of Tübingen

Languages: English and German

The serious impacts of climate change have urgently put the notion of human interaction with nature on the political agenda. This reflects the realization that humans are in the process of destroying their own livelihoods. While politics, however, is primarily concerned with obstructing the destruction, current European philosophy of nature, amongst other lines of endeavor following on from German Idealism, seeks to trace back the notion of reason in nature. Meanwhile, in the area of environmental and animal ethics, thought is being given to a fundamentally different approach to the engagement with nature. In addition, particularly in the field of sociology of knowledge, attention has recently been drawn to the profound shock of the current climate crisis on the understanding of human's self-image in modern times. What the various answers to this shock have in common is that they want to re-assess the relationship between people and their environment, things, nature and technology. Such a re-measurement goes beyond political action as it is evident, that in the history of European-Occidental philosophy the sphere of the political itself from ancient times has been understood as distinct from nature. The Aristotelian understanding of man as a *zoon politikon* is based on the fact that man is capable of legislating himself his own laws while the scope of such autonomy cannot reach the heteronomously determined laws of nature. This approach can still be found in the 20th century, for example, in Hannah Arendt's political philosophy. Therefore, the demand for the re-measurement of the relationship between man and nature is not only a question of political action, rather above all it is a question of 'the Political' in contrast to 'the Natural'. Precisely for this reason, merely ascribing an agency of its own to nature and things, will still fall short as it only increases the circle of those who participate in the sphere of political action. The inquiry about 'the Political' and 'the Natural' goes deeper and concerns philosophical thinking in the European-Occidental tradition in its foundations.

This is where the intercultural criticism has to commence the current struggle as call for renewal of the understanding of nature with respect to the thinking of non-European cultures and epochs. In recent years, corresponding works have been created primarily with respect to Buddhism and in recognition of the Latin American experience. The conference would like to build on this work, but also invites the contributions of other natural experiences of other philosophical traditions. Moreover, the importance of an intercultural experience of nature will be explored. If it is the case that the relationship between human beings and nature presents itself differently in the various approaches, then this plurality is more than just a matter of different conceptualizations of nature; then the human reality as a whole is affected and thus the question of the relation of the different approaches to each other will be emerged. Responding to such inquiries directly concerns the political dimension of nature.

Abstracts are invited for the following six sections:

- Nature in Non-Western Philosophical Traditions
- Decolonial Perspectives on Nature
- Politics of Nature
- Religion and Nature
- Phenomenology of Nature
- Gender and Nature: Positions of Feminist Philosophy

Please send an abstract of 500 words max. to abbed.kanoor@ciis.uni-tuebingen.de. Deadline is March 15th 2021. Please indicate in which section you would prefer to speak. Please also send a short bio. Successful applicants will be notified by early April.

The conference is planned as a face-to-face event, but will also be held as a hybrid event depending on the current Covid-19 pandemic situation.

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